May you be blessed all the days of 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Lakas search for bets on

Flavier, Legarda, Guingona, Drilon considered

By Vincent Cabreza and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
Volt Contreras and Christine O. Avendaño

WITH President Macapagal-Arroyo out of next year's presidential race, the chair of Lakas-NUCD has come up with several names to consider as the administration party's possible standard bearer.

Curiously, former Education Secretary Raul Roco, the man to beat if elections were to be held today according to recent surveys and a member of the administration coalition, is not among them.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., cochair of Lakas with Ms Macapagal, said yesterday that he favored the fielding of Sen. Juan Flavier as the presidential candidate of Lakas.

"*Pinakamalakas na pambato namin si* Johnny Flavier (Our strongest presidential bet is Flavier)," De Venecia said in Baguio a day after Ms Macapagal declared that she was not running in 2004.

Flavier, health secretary of the Ramos administration, used his diminutive height to full advantage using his quick wit and ready jokes to promote the government's health programs. He placed second in the 2001 senatorial election after broadcaster Noli de Castro.

De Venecia said Sen. Robert Barbers was also a possible presidential candidate. The Speaker described Barbers, a former Manila police officer, as the "White Hope" of Mindanao.

LAKAS/ A15

From survey loser to 'selfless martyr'

(Editor's Note: The following is an analysis by the Strategic Forecasting, LLC, a respected US think-tank based in Austin, Texas, with operations in Washington DC and New York City.)

ANALYSIS

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo surprised both opponents and supporters when she announced Dec. 30 that she would not contest the 2004 presidential elections. Ms Macapagal said her participation would serve only to perpetuate the internal political divisiveness in the Philippines, and that by bowing out of the race she could focus on tackling the economy, unemployment and corruption.

Ms Macapagal's announcement comes as her popularity is slumping and as opposition candidates have begun declaring their plans to run in 2004. By bowing out now, Ms Macapagal can shift the domestic focus to her opponents' bickering while setting herself up as a selfless martyr who is looking out for the good of the common Filipino.

And if all goes well, Ms Macapagal always can reluctantly accept the call of the people to run again.

The President's announcement has been met with equal measures of optimism and skepticism within the Philippines. On one side, opponents and supporters have called it a selfless act, one that others should emulate in order to end the country's political divisiveness and start moving toward a strong common future. On the other side,

FROM/ A15

Shears shared can save lives

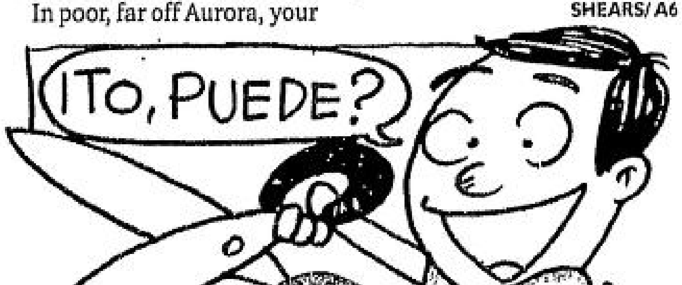
By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Should you decide to dispense with certain "old" items this New Year, don't throw that pair of scissors away.

In poor, far off Aurora, your shears could find good use among the province's 143 *hilot* (traditional midwives) who, for lack of doctors in rural villages, assist women at childbirth.

Many of them don't have a pair of scissors or can't afford

SHEARS/ A6



REFRESHING as the sight of the Banaue Rice Terraces is the happiness of the first family—Dato, Mr. Mike Arroyo, the President and Luli—as they like millions of Filipino families look forward to a brand new year with high hopes. *(See Mikey Arroyo, wife Angela and their daughter Mika on A15.)* MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Zodiac gazers see path to peace, spiritual unity

By Jennie L. Ilustre
PDI Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—From Washington pundits to zodiac gazers, what's in store in 2003? War against Iraq is topic No. 1, and the question is not if but when.

And yet western and Chinese astrologers say The Year of the tranquil-loving Water Goat, which begins Feb. 1, points to a peaceful period following the Year of the Warrior Horse.

Norman Ornstein, top TV analyst and resident scholar of the American Enterprise Institute, sees war in the near future. Ornstein is a respected pundit who is also plugged in on Inside Washington. In the early 1990s, he worked with current Vice President Dick Cheney, who was among the resident scholars in the conservative think tank, which is based in this capital city.

"Obviously, the nature and pace of UN inspections affect the timetable. But you can see from the urgency and aggressiveness of the Bush team's response, and the movement of troops and equipment to the region, that the January/February timetable is still basically operative," Ornstein said.

"Winter is the best, given short days—night vision advantage—and the need for some soldiers to wear heavy equipment against chemical or biological attack," he told the INQUIRER.

He said the new doctrine on preemptive strike "can make

ZODIAC/ A6

Fireworks fest to add sparks to RP tourism

By Volt Contreras

FROM being a traditional fare in New Year festivities, fireworks can be the next big draw for the country's struggling tourism industry.

That's another spark of marketing wisdom from Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, one of the skygazers who "wowed" and "ahhed" at the La Mancha International Fireworks Festival, which illuminated the sky over Manila Bay the past three nights.

The festival showcased the work of German, Chinese and Italian pyrotechnic experts in collaboration with Filipino technicians.

Gordon, interviewed by the INQUIRER on the second night of the festival, said the event served as a "prelude" to the Department of

FIREWORKS/ A15

RP's second woman CPA tallies 100

By Donna S. Cueto

IT was a celebration of life, love and family.

On the eve of her 100th birthday last month, Angelina Santos Vallarta, the second woman certified public accountant in the Philippines, got her fondest wish and celebrated her natal day surrounded by her two sons and four daughters, some of whom had come all the way from the United States and Canada.

They brought with them some members of the next generation of Vallartas, her grandchildren—at least those able to travel as some of the grandchildren were about to give birth to the next generation—and some of her great-grandchildren.

It was no ordinary birthday cel-

RP'S/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern section of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Second FRONTPAGE

GMA AFTER 'THE DECISION'

'I feel peaceful, liberated'

The President announcing her momentous decision on Monday.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

By Carlito Pablo and Robert Abaño, Frank Cimatu,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

"WE'VE never seen the President and the family so happy," said a close friend of the First Family recounting the events at the Mansion House in Baguio immediately before and after President Macapagal-Arroyo made her dramatic announcement last Monday.

The source described the President's demeanor as *"nabunutan ng tinik,"* or someone who just had a thorn removed from her body.

"I feel peaceful, liberated," the President said in television interview Monday.

"The President is not afraid anymore," her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, could be heard telling his three children, Mikey, Dato and Luli, as he hugged them.

The First Family, which is spending the Christmas and New Year holidays in Baguio, had invited as house guests Sabin and Betina Aboitiz and their son Samel; Berna Romulo, a daughter of Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo; and Joy Belmonte, a daughter of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte.

Also staying at the mansion were Mikey's wife Angela and daughter Mikaela and Dato's fiancee Kakai Manotok and her family.

The house guests arrived last Saturday and one thing was inescapable, according to the source.

"The President was in a super good mood and so was the entire family, they kept laughing and laughing," the source said.

Even the few presidential aides who were around were moved to say that if one were to ask the President to sign something, she would have readily done so because of her high spirits, the source said.

Of course, no one knew then that Ms Macapagal was about to make the shocking announcement that would redefine the country's political landscape.

"There was no talk of politics at the Mansion and everybody was feeling good," the source said.

After her speech at Baguio's Rizal Park on Monday, President Macapagal went back to the Mansion and talked to her guests.

"Now I can get to work, I can do the right things," Ms Macapagal told her friends.

Arroyo told the guests that only he and the President's brother, Diosdado Macapagal Jr., were supposed to know in advance of Ms Macapagal's decision.

"But I couldn't stand it so I had to tell Luli," Arroyo told the guests as Luli embraced him.

In a television interview from the Mansion on Monday night, the President told broadcaster Jessica Soho that her New Year's resolution was to shed her trademark *"katarayan."*

"Did you see me a while back? That's not unusual, I'm still trying to change though," she told Soho.

Earlier, in an interview with anchor Vicky Morales who kept asking her about 2004, Ms Macapagal raised her voice and told Morales: "I don't want to talk about it anymore. Politics has been dominating our lives."

Relief was evident in Ms Macapagal's face as she joined about 100 local officials, relatives, friends and supporters at the courtyard of the Mansion's guesthouse for dinner on Monday.

The President, who was wearing a bright red blazer over black pants and top, granted interviews to several broadcast media outlets throughout the day.

Ms Macapagal said she might go back to the academe after she completes her term on June 30, 2004.

"I can go back to teaching, which is what my father (former President Diosdado Macapagal) did after he retired," she said.

She said her critics were wrong in suspecting any sinister motive in her declaration that she would not seek the presidency in 2004.

"They see a political motive in everything I do. They were wrong," she said.

She said she sacrificed her presidential ambition to unite the Filipino people and it was not her problem if her critics refused to accept that.

"I'm not beholden to anyone," she said.

She said she was able reach that important decision through prayers and by remembering the nuggets of wisdom shared by her late father.

"It is better to be right than be President," she said, quoting her father.

Ms Macapagal told interviewer Solita Monsod that she wanted to be remembered for her contribution to the economy.

"Despite the world economic crisis, I was able to make our economy survive," she said.

She talked about strengthening her eight-point program that would boost employment and business in her last 18 months in office.

The scheduled closed-door Cabinet meeting here yesterday was canceled. Ms Macapagal did not schedule any official activity on Tuesday. *With a report from Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Military, Church back GMA, but militants skeptical

THE MILITARY will continue to support President Macapagal-Arroyo up to the end of her term, said Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, as he praised the President for her decision not to stand in the 2004 elections.

Reyes, the Armed Forces chief who played a major role in Ms Macapagal's rise to power when he turned against deposed President Joseph Estrada, said the AFP was "determined to support this administration up to (the end of) its term in the middle of 2004"

"And we will see to it that this administration will succeed," said Reyes in a news briefing.

He said Ms Macapagal's decision would not have much effect on the military which he said was "more united now that we have a President who is determined to do her job."

Analysts have said that the biggest impact of the President's giving up her presidential ambition was to squelch whatever hopes discontented and ambitious militarists had of seizing power in a weakened economy and ostensibly tainted administration.

Reyes is believed to harbor presidential ambitions himself and is seen as one of those seeking the endorsement of Ms Macapagal for the 2004 presidential race.

Development agenda

At the Senate, opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara urged the President to immediately set a specific 15-month development agenda and create a multi-party coalition to support it.

Angara, president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, said that with her decision not to seek the presidency, Ms Macapagal now had the freedom to get a development agenda moving and the moral ascendancy to ask everyone to support it.

On much the same note, Senate President Franklin Drilon said Ms Macapagal should stay neutral on congressional moves to amend the Constitution to avoid any imputation of political motives to her decision not to run in 2004.

"(The) high moral ground that she has achieved as a result of her announcement not to seek reelection would be eroded if she takes sides in the debates to amend the Constitution," he said.

Another administration senator, Francis Pangilinan, however, has proposed putting Charter change on the back burner because the issue is politically divisive and could detract from efforts to revive the economy.

Top Church officials yesterday asked the nation's political leaders to stop talking about politics and the 2004 elections even as they extolled the President for her "heroic act." They called her decision an act of "statesmanship of a high order."

"We believe her good intentions for the nation. I believe that her decision was motivated by her sense of patriotism," said Fr. Anton Pascual of Caritas Manila.

"Let's not talk about elections, let us work for the nation's welfare now," said Manila Auxiliary Bishop Socrates Villegas in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Villegas, spokesperson of Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, said the President did not seek Sin's advice when she made her surprising decision.

In Leyte, Palo Archbishop Pedro Dean said it was "noble and generous" of the President to sacrifice her ambition and wished "all of our politicians will do the same".

'Political gimmick'

But the militant Church group, the Promotion of Church People's Response said Ms Macapagal's move was "nothing but a political gimmick of someone who is desperate for a miracle to win in 2004".

Civil society and militant groups were even more skeptical. Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño said the President's announcement was "a virtual admission of a failure in leadership".

Wilson Fortaleza, president of the Sanlakas party list group, said militant labor was willing to suspend disbelief as long as the President showed real results immediately.

The founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, Jose Ma. Sison, urged Ms Macapagal to show her sincerity by allowing peace talks between the government and the communist rebels to resume.

The rejectionist faction of the CPP looked on the President's decision as either a ploy to recover her declining ratings or a plot to push Charter change for the 2004 elections to be canceled so her term could be extended beyond 2004. *Reports from Martin P. Marfil, Armand Nocum, Rocky Nazareno, Cynthia D. Balana, Gerald Lacuarta and Agnes E. Donato; Romulo O. Ponte and Delfin T. Mallari, Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Joey A. Gabieta, Jani Arnaiz and Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Post-9/11 crackdown a bane to Filipinos illegally in US

By Jerry Esplanada

(First of two parts)

SAN FRANCISCO—"Aling Nena" is known for her *"lutong bahay"* (home-style cooking) in the South of Market or SoMa quarter here, home to thousands of hyphenated Americans from the Philippines.

The 74-year-old immigrant from Pampanga has quietly made a name for herself in the Pinoy neighborhood with palate pleasers like *kare-kare*, *lumpia* and *dinuguan*, among other Filipino culinary classics.

Not only that. Aling Nena's cooking is "the kind that comes out of your mother's kitchen. And at budget prices. *Presyong kababayan*. You can't ask for more," said staff at the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Center on 7th Street, a short walk from Aling Nena's place on Clementina, a SoMa side street.

Absconder

Sometimes, the diminutive food caterer even makes deliveries herself to regular customers like West Bay's Filipino-American community workers who described her as "very motherly" and "such a darling."

But SoMa Fil-Ams will soon miss Aling Nena and her highly esteemed dishes. She is facing deportation, having been tagged an "absconder" or undocumented and overstaying alien by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Two months ago, INS agents came to her third-floor apartment, where she and some family members have been living for the past 11 years, and arrested her even without a warrant.

Aling Nena was briefly detained at an INS facility across the bay in Oakland. But the INS allowed her to return to her SoMa flat after posting bail amounting to $15,000 (about P635,000), promptly raised by family members and friends.

Aling Nena has until February 2003 to live her American dream. She has agreed to return to the Philippines instead of contesting the INS deportation order.

According to Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson, there are about 314,000 absconders or illegal aliens in the entire US.

In a Jan. 25, 2002 memorandum to the INS, Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Marshals Service, Thompson said the US government would "ultimately undertake to deport all (absconders) from the US," including "several thousand among the group who come from countries in which there has been al-Qaida terrorist presence or activity."

Al-Qaida has claimed responsibility for the murderous terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 which left more than 3,000 people dead in New York City and other parts of the US East Coast.

More than 900 Filipinos have been arrested this year by agents of various US Department of Justice agencies prior to deportation, according to an INQUIRER source at the US embassy in Manila.

The crackdown is part of a justice department directive called "Absconder Apprehension Initiative" or AAI, aimed at locating and apprehending potential terrorists by investigating people who fit the criteria.

Dangerous nationality

Between October 2001 and June 2002 alone, close to 500 Filipinos were sent back to the Philippines, reported AsianWeek, a local publication which calls itself the "voice of Asian-Americans."

Last June in Manila, US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelly said the INS would "definitely be on the lookout" against the re-entry of the deported Filipinos. She also said there was a slim chance the deportees will be allowed to return to the US.

The US Federal Aviation Authority last month declared Filipinos along with Indonesians and Malaysians as "dangerous nationalities" who must be monitored once they enter American territory.

210 jailed

One of the Filipino deportees was William Manalastas, another Pampanga native. He had held a full-time job as a laboratory technician at the Coca-Cola plant in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. His family also catered Filipino food in the Louisville area.

Manalastas was "one of 210 people across the nation tracked down and jailed following the US crackdown on illegal immigrants that followed the attacks," according to Philippine News.

The INS "specifically targeted men who come from Middle Eastern and South Asian countries where terrorist activities have been linked to Osama bin Laden," reported the San Francisco-based newspaper.

Unlike Aling Nena, Manalastas was not allowed to respond to INS charges of overstaying his visa and coming from a country where al-Qaida has active members. He was shuttled to at least four INS detention centers during a 110-day period.

At the El Centro, California facility, he was quoted by Fil-Am reporters as having told his children: "Filipinos are being dropped in the facility by the hour, coming from all parts of the country and INS workers are having trouble processing each one of them. They had to sleep on the floor one night. It wasn't until today they were assigned bunk beds." Last June 25, he was finally sent home, in shackles, with 62 other Filipino men and women.

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Course fee: Php 5,880.00/participant inclusive of handouts

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Jimenez pleads not guilty

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

MANILA Rep. Mark Jimenez's American lawyer entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf during his brief arraignment yesterday afternoon in a Miami, Florida court, according to Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay.

Jimenez heard the charges against him which include 47 counts of tax evasion, wire fraud and making illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party.

The 10-minute arraignment before Judge Theodore Bandstra of the US District Court of South Florida was the first time Jimenez appeared in public since arriving in Miami Sunday after a four-day circuitous journey from the Philippines.

"He managed to say only a brief hello and give us a smile," said Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama.

Pichay said that upon seeing the two of them, Jimenez, who was in khaki short sleeves, asked, "How are you," but the federal marshals guarding him told him not to talk to anyone.

"We just smiled at each other," said Villarama, who had expressed frustration over their lack of access to Jimenez.

Given the slip

Villarama and Pichay had planned to travel alongside the Federal Bureau of Investigation contingent that was taking Jimenez to America.

But after the first stop in Guam, the FBI agents shook off the two congressmen by flying Jimenez to Saipan, which was not in their stated itinerary.

Villarama and Pichay ended up flying on to the US mainland unaware that Jimenez was no longer on their flight.

Villarama, in a phone interview, said Jimenez was represented by Abbe David Lowell, former US President Bill Clinton's lawyer in the Monica Lewinsky case, and Benedict Kuehne in the arraignment held Monday at 1:30 p.m., Miami time.

He said that Consul Henry Bensurto of the Philippine Embassy in Washington D.C. attended the hearing as an observer.

57th birthday

Villarama said they learned about the arraignment only at around noon.

"He looks okay, he seems to be at peace," said Villarama. He said Jimenez was not in handcuffs when he stood before the judge.

Villarama said Jimenez would again appear in court at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday (Miami time) to ask for bail for his temporary liberty. His lawyer has reportedly asked for a $100,000 bond for his client.

Tuesday is also Jimenez's 57th birthday. He used to celebrate it with a grand feast that culminated in a fireworks display to also mark the New Year over his mansion in Forbes Park, Makati.

Pichay said there will be no birthday celebration for Jimenez this year because of his detention. Only one of his children, his daughter Claire, is in Miami.

The two congressmen said they were hopeful they would be allowed to visit Jimenez in detention on his birthday.

Pichay said they might also be asked by Jimenez's lawyers to "say something in court" during his bail hearing.

Supportive community

Asked what he would say to the court, Pichay said he would assure the court that Jimenez will not be a flight risk since he cannot return to the Philippines where he will be promptly arrested.

Pichay said the Filipino community in Miami was "supportive" of Jimenez, who once operated a computer parts company there.

"They have good words for MJ and his former employees described him as a good boss," Pichay said.

Pichay said Future Tech Inc., Jimenez's firm which he allegedly used as a conduit for making campaign contributions to the Democratic Party, was once one of the top 500 companies in Florida.

But since his indictment and departure for the Philippines, Jimenez was "eased" out of the company board, he said.

Villarama and Pichay said they were optimistic Jimenez would be granted bail by the court.

"I'm confident but you can never really tell," Pichay said.

Prosecutors, however, reportedly opposed bail for Jimenez, saying that in the past he had spent $100,000 in Las Vegas casinos in a single night.

Jimenez faces a 15-year sentence if found guilty of any of the charges. *With an AFP report*

Same police team that nabbed Rolito Go to hunt down Cardeño

By TJ Burgonio and Christian Esguerra

THE NEWLY designated commander of the task force created to hunt down the killers of Baron Cervantes has rounded up the same police team that helped him succeed in another previous celebrated case.

Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto, new chief of Task Force Cervantes, has re-formed the team that hunted down and arrested convicted traffic killer Rolito Go in 1996.

Maganto said the core of the team would be composed of his former subordinates at the Southern Police District. He said he has assigned four non-commissioned officers to join the task force.

Maganto vowed to arrest Cardeño "at all cost." Besides Cardeño, Santiago "Sonny" Camacho, the Land Transportation Office employee who allegedly set up the murder, is also being hunted.

"Justice will be served whatever the cost and circumstances. If we can effect his arrest immediately, we will do it," Maganto said.

As this developed, the National Bureau of Investigation revealed that it raided the safehouse of Cardeño in San Pedro, Laguna a couple of weeks ago, but failed to arrest him.

"They did not find him there. The operation was futile," said Chief Supt. Robert Delfin, police director for intelligence, in a phone interview, citing a report by NBI operatives. Delfin added that lawmen possessed no information on Cardeño's present whereabouts.

Cardeño was tagged as the brains behind the killing on Dec. 31, 2001 in Las Piñas City of Cervantes, self-styled spokesperson of the rightist military group Young Officers Union.

"I appeal to Cardeño to surface and face the allegations against him like a real man," Maganto said during rites marking Cervantes' first death anniversary at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque yesterday.

Maganto said he has given himself a deadline to collar the fugitive, although he refused to reveal the date. He hinted, however, that his team would try to arrest Cardeño and Camacho within two weeks.

Leonard de Vera, lawyer for the Cervantes family, noted that the fugitives had to be arrested before Jan. 15, 2003, the date of the murder trial.

Otherwise, he said, the testimonies of suspects Joseph Mostrales, Erlindo Torres and Jaime Centeno pinning the two fugitives would not count because the latter had not been arraigned.

Mostrales, the confessed gunman, and his men had admitted in affidavits that Cardeño had ordered them to kill Cervantes.

Nation remembers Roxas on 111th birthday

THE NATION marks today the 111th birth anniversary of Manuel A. Roxas, the last president of the Philippine Commonwealth and the first of the Republic.

Roxas, born in Capiz (now Roxas City) on Jan. 1, 1892 to Gerardo Roxas and Rosario Acuña, was a posthumous baby, his father having been killed by Spanish soldiers the April before.

He largely attended the public schools, completing his secondary education at the Manila High School (Araullo High School), graduating with highest honors in 1909.

He graduated from the University of the Philippine College of Law in 1913, again at the head of his class.

Roxas topped the bar exams that year, making him the first bar topnotcher in the Philippines.

For 36 years, he held various public offices, beginning in 1917 as a member of the Capiz municipal council and culminating when he became President of the country.

In between, he served as the youngest governor of his province from 1919 to 1922, was elected to the House of Representatives in 1922 where he became speaker for 12 years, became a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1934-35, was secretary of finance, and was chair of National Economic Council and the National Development Co. and other government agencies.

He was also a brigadier general in the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) and a guerilla leader. He was also president of the Philippine Senate.

After serving as Chief Executive for 23 months, President Roxas passed away on April 15, 1948 at the age of 56.

The late Senate president Gerry Roxas was his son and the present secretary of trade and industry, Manuel A. Roxas II, his namesake, is his grandson.

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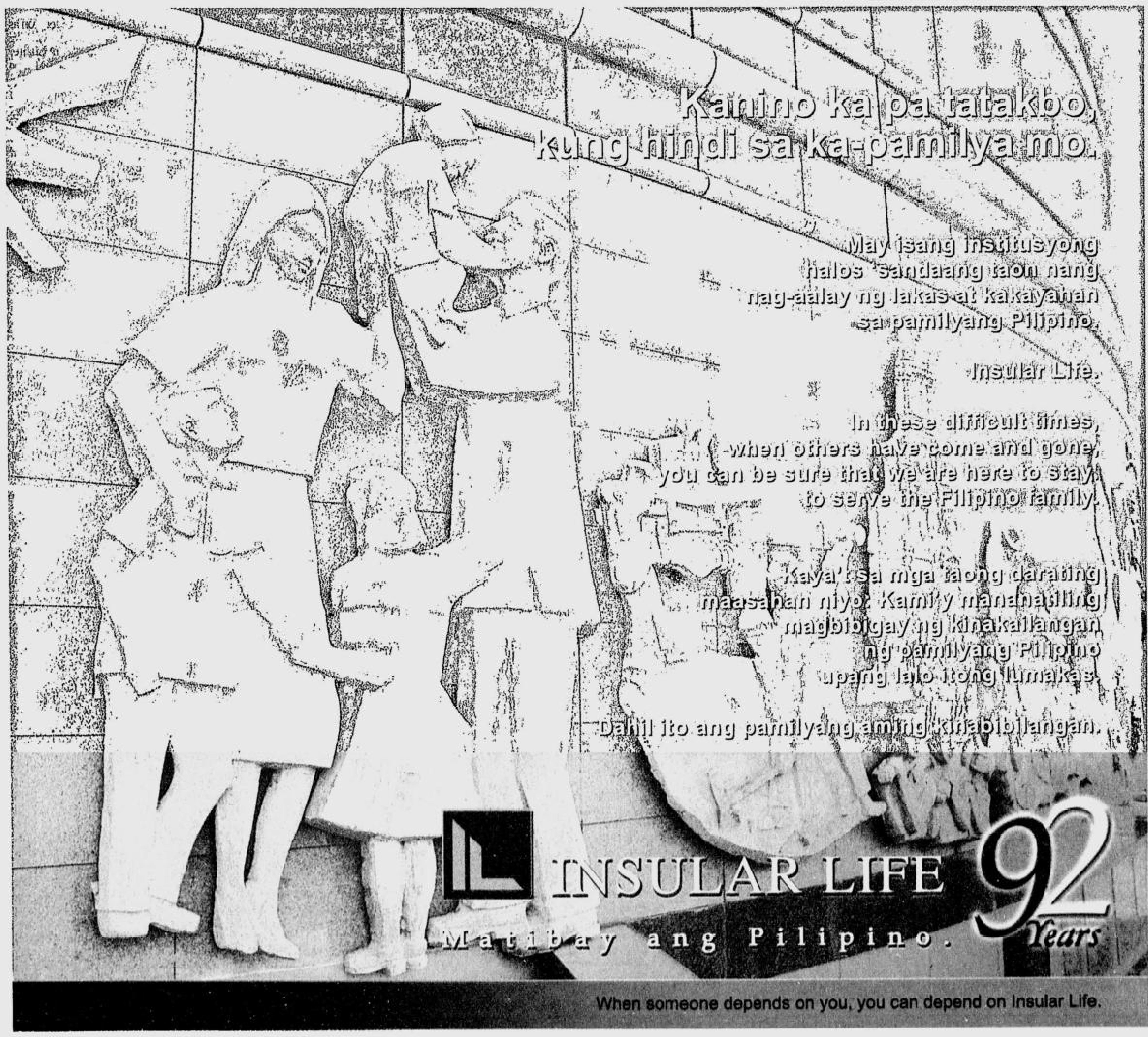
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The DFA as crisis manager

By Blas F. Ople

Secretary of Foreign Affairs

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo speaks before the Filipino community in Hanoi during her visit to Vietnam. Seated are Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople.

The year 2002 has been a memorable one for me and the Department of Foreign Affairs. On July 30, 2002, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo appointed me as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, a job I did not solicit and did not covet. It was first offered to me as early as December 2001 during a private dinner in Malacanang, long before there was a leadership squabble in the Senate, and was therefore, at least in the President's mind not related to the Senate intramural that would ensue several months later.

At that time, the President could already clearly foresee the possibility of a falling out with her foreign secretary, Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Jr., who apparently did not subscribe to her basic policy of nurturing the Philippine-US security relationship in spite of the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1951, and her policy of supporting the US-led coalition against international terrorism. The break was to come later on the issue of the Joint Balikatan exercises against the Al-Qaeda-related terrorism of the Abu Sayyaf in Southern Mindanao.

Since I took over the DFA stewardship, we have had to cope with an unending series of crises which tested the mettle and resilience of the Philippine foreign service. The Department, in retrospect, weathered all these challenges, with quiet competence and dignity. One of the most serious of these challenges was the mass deportation of illegal Filipino workers from Malaysia. These issues were soon overcome with the cooperation of the Malaysian government, especially the head of government himself, Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, who ordered a freeze on the arrest of Filipino illegals following a telephone request from President Arroyo and a series of diplomatic protests filed by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

A Presidential Crisis Management Committee, headed by Presidential Adviser Nur Jaafar, and staffed by our mobile consular teams, did a good job with ocular surveys of the detention centers in Sabah, negotiations with the Sabah authorities, and adequate reception centers in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, and in Zamboanga City.

The Sabah issue at one time focussed on the alleged rape of a 13-year-old girl, code-named Angelica, allegedly by some of her Malaysian guards, which raised media hackles in both the Philippines and Malaysia.

It appears the girl was mistakenly deported, she being a Malaysian national based on DNA data provided by the Malaysian police. At our request, DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman took good care of Angelica, providing her with psychologists, teachers and social workers who nourished her back to health and taught her the basics. Secretary Soliman has turned her over to the counterpart of the DSWD in Kuala Lumpur, while the Philippine Embassy continues to monitor her condition and the trial that is scheduled on the rape case by a court in Sabah.

The rumbles of an imminent war over Iraq and the Middle East also kept the DFA busy laying down and refining contingency plans to assure the safety and welfare of some 1.5 million Filipinos working in the Middle East. We have secured the pledges of cooperation from all the concerned states and the international humanitarian agencies of the United Nations, especially the International Organization for Migration (IOM) which helped evacuate to safety 27,000 Filipinos in the 1991 Gulf War.

We have also organized the evacuation of some 100 Filipinos trapped in the Ivory Coast civil war in Africa, at the initiative of our embassy in Abuja, Nigeria.

The DFA also monitored the repatriation of 83 Filipinos accused of various crimes and violations of the US immigration laws the United States. The department sent two consuls to Nepal to deliver a check for P800,000.00 as "blood money" to appease the relatives of a Nepali allegedly killed by a Filipino in Saudi Arabia, who will now be spared the death sentence by a Saudi court. The DFA also secured the release from a Chinese prison in Beijing of a Filipino convicted of killing a Chinese co-worker, Rizalde Astrolubio, who has now rejoined his family in Capiz City.

The New Year will not put an end to these crises involving Filipinos abroad. True, the Department, with its shoestring budget, is chronically overstretched in attending to the needs of an estimated 4 million OFWs among 7.4 million Filipinos overseas in 140 countries, some of which are historically trouble-prone. But the Department does not flinch from such challenges. We have a competent and dedicated foreign service, which a respected editor and pundit, Congressman Teddy Boy Locsin, characterized as "the most professional in the entire Philippine government."

The DFA, with its posts scattered across all the world's time zones, is always on a 24-hour alert. We are like a city that never sleeps. The DFA's CORATEL is manned 24 hours a day, functioning like a central nervous system to all the Filipino communities abroad.

Given the Department's experience and culture of service, we are therefore not fazed by the prospect of having to manage new crises in foreign affairs this coming year.

We are satisfied that the latest crisis, the closure of three foreign embassies in Manila – the Australian, Canadian and European Commission offices – has been successfully resolved without in the slightest marring our excellent relationships with the countries concerned.

In the New Year the nation will see the DFA more closely involved in the effort to forge a lasting peace with our insurgents. I had once warned Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes that the CPP-NPA insurgency which has hobbled our national development during the past three decades may meet its end at the diplomatic front ahead of any military outcomes in the battlefield. We have already succeeded in isolating the NDF-CPP-NPA from their sources of foreign funding and international political support. The US, EU, The Netherlands, Canada and the United Kingdom have all declared Jose Ma. Sison and the NPA as "foreign terrorist organizations" whose funds and assets should be frozen and whose movement to those countries is legally banned.

Together with the Department of National Defense and the Office of the President we are helping the government peace panel led by Secretary Silvestre Bello and Presidential Adviser Eduardo Ermita in crafting the final peace terms of the government to be offered to the NDF negotiating panel. The Norwegian government has already acceded to our request to facilitate and mediate the final peace settlement.

If successful this peace process will permit our Communist brothers to return to the fold of mainstream society, to transform themselves into a peaceful political party capable of competing for power in the constitutional arena. But it also stipulates that they should lay down their arms in exchange for total amnesty and for substantial "humanitarian assistance."

We want to welcome Jose Ma. Sison and his associates back from foreign self-exile to become active and vibrant participants in building a just, peaceful and fraternal Filipino society. I might even vote for Joma Sison should he decide to run for the Senate on a Guingona ticket. In the Senate he will have a forum unlimited for his socialist and nationalist advocacy.

In the year 2003, the nation will conduct its first global exercises in overseas voting. I assume that the Senate-House Bicameral Conference Committee will be able to resolve the disagreeing provisions in their respective bills by January 14, as agreed upon by the leaders of both Houses. This will impose on the Department of Foreign Affairs, as deputized agents of the Commission on Elections, a great burden of carrying out the awesome duties of conducting the electoral process, from registration to the balloting and counting under COMELEC supervision. This will be the most ambitious logistical exercise in Philippine history and by universal consent, only the DFA, with the assistance of volunteer workers abroad, can pull this through.

And yet the political empowerment of overseas Filipinos has been my consistent aim since I helped frame the provision in the present Constitution for overseas absentee voting in the Constitutional Commission of 1986 and being one of the principal authors of the absentee voting bill in the Senate.

I would like to make sure – and this I publicly pledge to the Filipino people – that the overseas voting under COMELEC supervision will be conducted in a transparent, clean, free and orderly manner. The Philippine foreign service will fully live up to the trust of the Filipino people.

The DFA, under my stewardship, will pursue relentlessly our self-imposed vision of building a world-class foreign service in the service of a strong republic.

I am, since birth, an inveterate optimist. I deeply believe in the great potentials of the Filipino nation, which can be realized through President Arroyo's vision of a strong republic. We Filipinos are given to too much self-deprecation and self-flagellation, resulting in a damaged self-esteem. My fellow Filipinos, why not give this nation – our very own – a chance?

Facing the many fronts of a global nation

Fixed boundaries no longer exclusively define the Filipino nation. Technology and science have shortened distances and abbreviated time. Filipinos are in over 150 countries and in all the world's oceans. Our interests can be found in all parts of the world and events anywhere can deeply affect us as a nation. Our diplomacy must contend with the many fronts that face a truly global nation like the Philippines.

The year 2002 comes to a close as the Philippines watches its presence on the world stage continue to grow. This comes in the form of its upcoming assumption of the Asian seat in the United Nations Security Council, its continuing efforts in issues affecting the developing countries, and not least, its unflinching stance towards terrorism.

We start the new year by putting behind us the misunderstandings that caused the "closure" of three diplomatic posts in Manila. By 2 January 2003, the Australian, Canadian and European Union Embassies in Manila will have resumed full operations.

Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople took a firm stand on this issue. He met with the embassies concerned and with the entire diplomatic community, brought the Philippine security, defense and intelligence agencies into the picture and established clear means of communication between the diplomatic community and these agencies.

The Department also acted decisively on the decision of the Schengen states to include the Philippines in a 24-country list which will require additional time for the processing of visas.

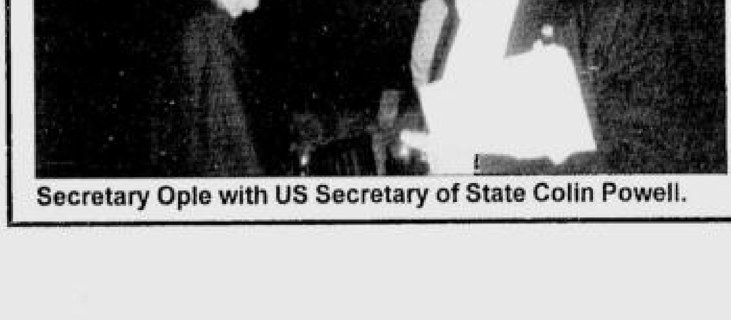
For the future, things look bright in terms of diplomatic representation in Manila. The International Maritime Office has selected the Philippines to host its regional office.

The attention of the world continues to focus on the still unresolved issue of Iraq's accounting of its weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

On 30 August 2002, Secretary Ople convened the Inter-Agency Crisis Management and Security Committee at the Department of Foreign Affairs to review existing contingency plans to ensure the safety and well being of the one and a half million Filipinos in the Middle East. Subsequently, the President formed the Middle East Preparedness Team (MEPT) headed by Ambassador Roy Cimatu. The MEPT has prepared its contingency plans and will be establishing a forward base in Kuwait.

In his statement before the United Nations General Assembly on 17 September 2002, Secretary Ople challenged the United Nations to resolve the looming confrontation brought about by Iraq's failure to comply with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, especially Resolution 1441.

While in New York, Secretary Ople, also met with the heads and officers of leading international humanitarian agencies to discuss the plight of the Filipino deportees from Sabah and the need to anticipate the displacement of Filipino workers in the Middle East that might be brought about by a US attack on Iraq.



Secretary Ople with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

On the sidelines of the 57th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and amidst diplomatic efforts to resolve the Iraqi issue, Secretary Ople met separately with US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Marc Grossman and Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri.

Secretary Ople discussed with Undersecretary Grossman matters relating to the role the Philippines has been playing in the war against terrorism. Undersecretary Grossman took the opportunity to express the appreciation of the US Government for the leadership shown by the Philippines in fighting terrorism.

In his meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri, Secretary Ople reiterated the desire of the Philippines for Iraq to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The protection of overseas Filipinos remains one of the top priorities of Philippine diplomacy.

With Malaysia tightening up on illegal immigration, Filipinos by the thousands found themselves suddenly unwelcome in a land that many had considered part of their home. The Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur attended to their documentation needs via the dispatch of consular teams from the capital.

Closer to home, the intensified campaign to help OFWs brought about the filing of a lawsuit by the Philippine Embassy in Seoul against a Korean club owner where 11 Filipino women were rescued after being made to work as "sex slaves". Among those rescued was a 16-year old Filipina who was illegally recruited to work in South Korea.

Secretary Ople and DSWD Secretary Dinky Soliman meet with other officials to discuss the situation of Filipino returnees from Sabah.

In Kuwait, four Filipinos implicated in the killing of a Canadian national were acquitted by the Kuwaiti Court of Appeals, reversing an earlier conviction handed down by a Kuwaiti Court. Three OFWs, arrested and detained for the alleged killing of a Saudi national in 1997, were also acquitted of murder charges in Saudi Arabia.

The DFA is grateful for the help of the Filipino community in Hong Kong and the management of the Journal Group of Publications for raising half a million pesos for the blood money needed to save Primo Gasmen from execution in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The protection of Filipinos overseas necessarily begins with their passports. The passports of our Filipinos must be beyond reproach and their integrity unimpeachable. The Department intends to inaugurate on June 2, 2003 the Machine Readable Passport Visa (MPRV) system which is hoped to do away with all forms of passport fraud.

While terrorism is not an entirely new phenomenon, it has taken center stage in the international public consciousness. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has joined with our regional neighbors in strengthening our collective resolve in combating terrorism in our recent APEC and ASEAN Summits held in Mexico and Cambodia respectively

Secretary Ople shakes hands with United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan.

A special mission headed by Secretary Ople to Europe in October was followed by an announcement out of Brussels that the European Union had declared the New People's Army a terrorist organization and exiled Communist Party of the Philippines founding Chairman Jose Ma. Sison as a terrorist. Earlier, the same declarations were made by the United States, Canada, The United Kingdom and The Netherlands.

The Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea between ASEAN member states and the People's Republic of China, which Secretary Ople described as a major leap for peace that would lead to the eventual adoption of a code of conduct, was signed in early November. This landmark agreement, signed by ASEAN foreign ministers and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi of China, is expected to greatly ease tensions in the region.

During the State Visit of the President to Vietnam, Secretary Ople signed on 6 November 2002 a framework of bilateral cooperation with Minister Nguyen Dy Nien of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam that commits both parties to the maintenance of peace and stability in the South China Sea.

In 1998, the Philippines launched its candidature for a non-permanent seat to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2004-2005. The election will be held during the 58th UN General Assembly in New York in September 2003. To ensure a win for RP's bid, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) established a Security Council Task Force (SECTAF) to coordinate and spearhead our campaign.

To date, the Philippines has already secured the support and endorsement of the Asian Group of UN Members, including the ASEAN community, for its UNSC bid.

On November 20, Secretary Ople and Ambassador Kojiro Takano of the Embassy of Japan signed two Japanese Grant Aid Projects, with a total amount of Y917 million or approximately PhP 406 million at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

In January 2003, the Canadian Embassy is set to launch a training program in small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) for the ARMM, which Secretary Ople cited as an important strategic contribution to our capacity building programs for the people of Mindanao.

Secretary Ople and German Chargé d' Affaires a.h. Roland Grafe signed on December 27, 2002, at the Department of Foreign Affairs, the RP-Germany Financial Cooperation Agreement by which Germany committed 23.83 million euro (or approximately 1.3 billion pesos) in addition to reprogrammed funds of 11.40 million euro (or approximately 627 million pesos), making available a total of 35.23 million euro (or approximately 1.9 billion pesos) for the implementation of development projects in the Philippines, mainly aimed at reducing poverty, in the next eight years.

Advt.

SC acts to save 10 minors from Death Row

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SUPREME Court oversight committee has recommended to the full court the commutation of the death sentences imposed on at least 10 minor offenders who otherwise face execution by lethal injection.

The powerful SC oversight committee chaired by Senior Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo took up the cudgels for the young convicts, saying the maximum penalty of death should not be meted out to minors.

Aside from Bellosillo, the second highest magistrate next to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., the oversight committee is composed of Associate Justices Jose A.R. Melo, Bernardo P. Pardo and Arturo B. Buena.

Bellosillo told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview the committee was inclined to believe the trial courts had erred in imposing the death penalty on the 10 convicts.

Under the Heinous Crime Law, which reinstated capital punishment in the country in 1993, those found guilty of crimes considered heinous like murder, statutory rape and robbery with homicide should be sentenced to death.

Minor offenders, however, should be meted out the next lower penalty for the crime charged, as their minority could be used as a mitigating circumstance.

The oversight committee had earlier recommended the transfer of the 10 convicts out of Death Row.

"They appeared to be minors at the time they committed their offenses but nonetheless they were sentenced to death by the trial courts," Bellosillo said.

Bellosillo had asked for the records of the convicts to confirm this.

After reviewing their cases, the committee asked the full court to move the 10 youthful offenders from Death Row to the medium security compound at the National Penitentiary in Muntinlupa.

The transfer was ordered by the high court on July 30 after it ruled that youthful offenders should not share jail space with hardened criminals.

With the help of the oversight committee, the sentence of one of the 10 offenders was lowered from death to life in prison.

Fred (not his real name) was only 14 when he and a friend raped a 22-year-old guest relations officer in Parañaque City, Bellosillo said.

Despite a birth certificate authenticated by the National Statistics Office that proved his age, the trial court failed to appreciate Fred's minority and sentenced him to death.

"On automatic review, the SC reduced his penalty to reclusion perpetua because (aside from his minority) he was drunk when he committed the offense," Bellosillo said.

"His penalty may even be reduced further if it could be ascertained that he was only 14 years old when he committed the crime. Just the same, he has been removed from Death Row," Bellosillo said.

Besides Fred, the oversight committee found proof that two other offenders were minors when they committed the crimes charged them.

Satur (not his real name) was only 15 when he and 14 others held up a couple in their house, killed them and fled with their belongings.

Satur was transferred out of Death Row after the civil registrar of Cagayan de Oro City issued a birth certificate proving his minority. The SC is now reviewing his sentence.

The third youthful offender, Lara (not her real name) was sentenced to death after she was found in the hideout of a gang holding a kidnap victim.

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Aceh rebels oppose Filipino peacekeepers

THE GOVERNMENT has put on hold the deployment of additional Filipino peace monitors in Aceh province in Indonesia, after separatist rebels there opposed the Philippines' participation in the process, officials said.

Some members of the rebel Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which signed a landmark peace agreement with Indonesia on Dec. 9, had questioned the impartiality of the Filipino observers.

They claimed that the Philippines was indebted to Indonesia for helping broker peace talks in 1996 between the Philippine government and the Muslim separatist Moro National Liberation Front.

Foreign affairs department spokesperson Victoriano Lecaros told reporters that eight Filipino peacekeepers already in Aceh would not be sent back home, but negotiations were going on for the other members who were scheduled to be dispatched.

"We are not sure if they (GAM) would allow the remaining 17 Philippine peace monitors to go to Aceh. We are still negotiating that," Lecaros said.

Brig. Gen. Nagamora Lomodag, who heads the team of Filipino peacekeepers, met with Aceh rebel leaders on Dec. 23 to try to assure them that the aim of the whole operation was to help the peace process. *Reuters*

Act would punish phone, cyber sex

SEN. Manuel Villar Jr. has proposed a law that would punish the use of the telephone and other telecommunications facilities, such as the Internet, for commercial sex activities.

Under Villar's Anti-Dial-a-Porn Act, it would be unlawful to establish or provide a phone-sex business or similar activities designed to transmit lewd or lascivious messages through the telephone or other telecommunications media.

The senator was provoked into drafting the bill after a recent National Bureau of Investigation raid on an Internet pornography firm in Makati in which six women were caught performing sexual acts in front of cameras wired to the Internet.

"There is no law in our country that punishes those who offer phone-sex services. We need this law to prevent the proliferation of such services," the senator said.

Villar said his anti-porn law would help prevent Filipino women from becoming victims of commercial sex site operators and from being turned into cyber sex workers.

He expressed concern over recent media reports that the country was slowly being turned into the world's Internet porn capital.

Under the Villar bill, violators face imprisonment of between six to eight years and a fine of P10,000 to P20,000. *Rocky Nazareno*

Speed up Pinoy's slay probe, Ople asks UK

FOREIGN Secretary Blas Ople has asked the British government to speed up its investigation into the death of a Filipino nurse in Manchester, England early last month.

In a letter to British Foreign Minister Jack Straw, Ople asked that the the killers of Filipino nurse Deborah Remorozo be identified and brought to justice.

Ople said he wrote the letter in behalf of the family and friends of Remorozo "whose sorrow had been made deeper by losing their loved one this Christmas season."

Remorozo was found dead in her apartment on Vale Drive, Greater Manchester on the afternoon of Dec. 8. Investigators said there were no signs of forced entry to her flat.

"I hold every hope that we will find those who committed this heinous crime and that justice will be done. I am confident that the government of the United Kingdom will do everything it can to help bring this about," Ople said.

On receiving the Philippine Embassy's report on the killing, Ople instructed Ambassador Cesar Bautista to form a consular team to coordinate with Manchester authorities. *Norman Bordadora*

This New Year, I promise to
exercise everyday, wear less make-up,
grow my hair longer, don a halter top,
buy red lipstick, eat a hearty breakfast,
get another little black dress,
take the stairs going up,
crave for sweets less, meet more people,
ask a guy for a date, wear high heels,
reward myself more, stress myself less,
have my nails done once a week,
show more skin, try on shorter skirts,
hike up a mountain, take up a new sport,
get a different hairstyle, wear super low jeans,
enroll in pilates, live life fully.

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Healthy cells make healthy bodies

Zodiac gazers see path to peace, spiritual unity

From page A1

sense—if it's carried out sensitively, with an emphasis on collaboration and cooperation, and a commitment to nation-building."

Horoscope

On March 22, 2003, the sun enters the sign of Aries and begins the astrological year, setting the energy course for the next 12 months.

Drawing on historical data and astrology, analyst Misty Kuceris of the neighboring Virginia state, said the chart showed that in 2003, "partnership and commitment, marriages and family will be more important, as well as trying to get along well with other people."

Kuceris, who writes magazine columns and whose clients include businessmen, said the war with Iraq was possible.

But she added that in March, Uranus would enter Pisces, starting a seven-year cycle that occurs every 84 years. During such a cycle, she told the INQUIRER, "Everybody tries to do what they can to avert war, promoting peace instead, trying to go over the next seven years in understanding diverse cultures, and how to get along well with other people."

She noted that the League of Nations—the precursor of the United Nations—was born during such a cycle. And so was the women's right to vote.

"The war could take place in March, and any military activity in March would be especially bad for us economically," she said. "Or it could take place in June, which shows a lot of planetary activities."

She said unexpected events happen during a lunar eclipse, from May 15 to the end of June. Secrets could be revealed, such as a spy activity. Or military events could take place, "but we wouldn't know about it until July."

Regarding terrorism, Kuceris said that in June, which shows many planetary activities, people should be "very, very cautious with traveling."

Live, let live

In Chinese astrology, Feb. 1, 2003 through Jan. 21, 2004 is The Year of the Water Goat.

Shelly Wu's feature articles have appeared regularly in A. Magazine: Inside Asian America. Her horoscope columns and feature articles have also appeared regularly in The Rainbow News and Psychic Interactive magazines. Her forecasts have also been aired on ABC News and BBC and on radio talk shows. Her yearly predictions are published by the Wireless Flash news service.

On her website, she said the Water Horse is also known in the East as the Warrior Horse. She said that wars and war rumors in the Year of the Horse had left many people completely drained. The world continues toward a path of spiritual oneness, but it still would have to deal with the presence of intolerant dictators, according to Wu.

Relief, however, is on the horizon during the Year of the Goat. She said the Goat's "live and let live" attitude would resolve the conflicts in the previous Snake and Horse Years.

The creative Goat is disorganized, but it's also peaceful and adaptable, according to Wu, whose latest book is "Fate, Destiny & You."

Tranquility loving Goat represents elegance and creativity, she said. The year 2003 will be "a lazier year, more dependent and changeable—where outward appearances can be deceiving. All must avoid the sleeping, muddy waters of delays and inactivity."

Astrologer Kelli Fox described the traits of people born under the sign of the Sheep or the Goat (1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003) on her website. This creative sign loves to daydream, according to Fox. Its artistic temperament tends to make Goats insecure. They constantly need to feel loved and admired.

Rainfall Horoscopes, which notes on its website that its information is intended for entertainment purposes only, says Sheep people are compassionate and quick to forgive. Lady Luck always smiles on Goat people, according to the horoscopes. They always get their own way in a peaceful way. Extremely talented, they can go far in life, particularly if they are encouraged.

Rainfall Horoscopes says Goat people are not the confiding type, and have to be coaxed into telling others what's bothering them. They are family-oriented. They never forget birthdays. (They also expect others to remember theirs.) They live for romance and have a tendency to see the world through rose-tinted glasses.

A QUIET moment with the Lord for a prayer of thanksgiving before the riotous revelry of New Year's Eve. JOAN BONDOC

Shears shared can save lives

From page A1

to replace their ancient set, according to Dr. Ana Maria Consuelo, program director of the Kalusugan Lingkod sa Aurora (Kalinga).

The most ideal gift is a pair of surgical scissors, she said.

In the absence of one, they cut the umbilical cords of babies with borrowed knives and scissors that are at least sterilized by heating or by soaking in alcohol.

Consuelo said *hilot* deserve help for the services they render to women in Aurora, including those from the Dumagat and Alta tribes.

The *hilot* of Aurora serve amid poverty, the province being one of the 20 poorest in the country.

10 hours by bus

Due to its location and inadequate government support, Aurora has limited access to health services and equipment.

Straddling the northeastern tip of the Sierra Madre mountain range, Aurora is 10 hours by bus from Metro Manila and five hours from Nueva Ecija, its closest province. Getting to Quezon province by boat via the Pacific Ocean is risky, especially when the seas are choppy.

Then, too, the province's budget for public health had steadily declined over the years. From P509,000 in 2000, this went down to P400,000 last year. This year, it was further cut to P170,000. Last year, the money for medicines was only P40,000.

Maternal mortality

Poverty plus low expenditure for public health had taken their toll on women's lives. Aurora's maternal mortality rate, according to Consuelo, is 200 per 100,000 live births. It is considered the highest in Central Luzon.

For a host of other reasons, the *hilot* have become important health workers in the communities.

Rare doctors

There are less than 10 full-time government doctors in this province of 173,797 people (based on the 2000 census). Private medical practitioners are rare because the residents cannot afford their services.

"In many far-flung barrios they (*hilot*) are, in fact, the only alternative," Consuelo said.

Scissors, it turns out, are only one of the many life-saving items that *hilot* in Aurora sorely need to enable them to help women deliver babies in the safest way possible.

Gathered by Kalinga and the provincial health office for the first time in a convention last November, *hilot* turned up with a list of must-have things.

A blood pressure measuring device, stethoscopes, surgical gloves, weighing scales, forceps, medicines for obstetrical emergencies, cord clamps and povidone-iodine topped the list.

Because their services are needed even at night and during bad weather, *hilot* added flashlights, raincoats and rubber boots to the list.

Despite scarce resources, the *hilot* of Aurora have helped save the lives of many rural women.

Heroism

The convention's proceedings spoke of unreported heroism. A lot of *hilot* work under difficult conditions that would dishearten even the best doctors, according to Consuelo.

"We walked for 30 minutes amid driving rain. When we reached the house, we found the mother sitting on a pool of blood," a *hilot* related.

"I told the husband I could not deal with the situation anymore. We looked for a car and rushed her to the Aurora Memorial Hospital (AMH in Baler town). There, the doctors told us that caesarean was not done in the hospital. We took the mother to Cabanatuan City. She needed blood transfusion. It was I who looked for the blood. The only money I got at that time was P500, which we spent (for the emergency)," she said.

Another told of difficult deliveries. There were twins, who were almost suffocated by their own umbilical cords. And then there were babies whose hands, bellies or knees came out first.

A *hilot* recalled that in numerous cases when the family was very poor, it was she who spent for the broth to feed the weak mother.

Thank you

"*Salamat lang ang madalas na kabayaran* (A thank you is often what I get as payment)," Leory, a 36-year-old hilot, said.

Like other *hilot*, Leory tills a small farm to sustain her community health work. Aside from being an acupuncturist, she is the chair of the Samahan ng Magbubukid na Kababaihan sa Aurora.

The needs of the *hilot* are summed up in three letters: *Kagamitan* (materials), *kaalaman* (knowledge) and *kasanayan* (skills).

Their ages range from 24 to 76 years old. Many are now in their 50s. Most are elementary graduates. The field is still a woman's domain. Only three of the *hilot* are men.

Grandmothers

They initially learned the rudiments of child delivery by helping their grandmothers, mothers and aunts who were *hilot* themselves.

Over the past 10 years, Kalinga has given training to *hilot*, combining traditional and modern methods. The provincial health office worked much earlier in this field.

Most of the *hilot* have an average of 10 years in the field. One woman, whom everybody calls "Nanay," has been a *hilot* for 56 years.

They are spread in central Aurora (Baler, Dingalan, Dipaculao, Maria Aurora and San Luis) and northern Aurora (Casiguran, Dilasag and Dinalungan).

"And we're used to long hours of walking or bumpy rides on trikes or bikes," Leory said.

At the convention, they pointed to the need to improve the early referral system for complicated cases. While women resist pre-natal services or refuse to be taken to the hospital because of lack of money, Consuelo said much of the problem lies in the system at the AMH.

"Often, there is no ambulance. When the vehicle is available, there is no money for gas. Then at the AMH, *hilot* get a lot of scolding (for not making early referrals). Later, they are told to take the patients to Cabanatuan because Caesarean is not performed at AMH," she related.

Kalinga can be reached at Sitio Kinalapan, Barangay Pingit, Baler, Aurora. Emails are received at anamariaconsuelo@hotmail.com

RP's second woman CPA tallies 100

From page A1

ebration that Mama Yeyeng's children threw for her at the Manila Peninsula on Dec. 1. There has never been a celebration for a century-old lady at the hotel before, said Mila Vallarta, one of her daughters.

Angelina Vallarta, or Mama Yeyeng as she is known to everyone, was born on Dec. 2, 1902.

There was much dancing and singing and good food, and speeches giving tribute to the one person everyone considered as the "root" of the family.

"Ma, tonight we celebrate your life and 100 full years. Thank you for all the love you and Papa Carling gave us; for the hard work to put us all through the best schools, and for the support to follow our dreams," said son Carlos Vallarta Jr.

"We toast your accomplishments. Here's to many more years! England had their Queen Mother, the Kennedys had Rose Kennedy, we have you," he said.

Mama Yeyeng cannot walk around much or hear well but is still very lucid. Her mind is as sharp as ever. She can remember the birth dates of each of her six children.

"I want them all to be always happy because I am happy," she said just before she curled up to sleep, still wearing her gold dress.

She retired to her hotel room just before the dancing started.

She can no longer see after an operation for glaucoma in the early 1990s, but her voice is still strong.

Unlike others half her age, she does not suffer from high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes. The only serious ailment she's had is her cataract and glaucoma.

She will eat anything. There is no such thing as "bad food" for her and does not worry much about cholesterol. She even likes pork and pork fat and is not one to squirm at the sight of *lechon*.

She remembers very clearly and recalls with great detail the important events of her life, foremost of which was her being the second Filipino woman to become a CPA in the 1920s.

The first woman CPA was Belen Enrile Gutierrez.

Mama Yeyeng comes from a long-lived family line. Her father Flaviano Santos died at the age of 96. Her mother Agatona Mercado died much earlier, at 78.

She and her late husband Carlos Velarde Vallarta worked hard to put all of their six children through school and their efforts have paid off.

All their children are now happy and successful in their chosen fields: Ditas, Ching, Mila, Vida, Carlos Jr. and Victor.

Ditas, who is married to Peter O'Neil, is based in Canada. Three other children—Ching (married to Bibitz Bondoc), Mila and Carlos Jr. (married to Ludita Herrera)—are based in the United States where they have achieved success. Carlos Jr. holds an executive position at the United Nations in New York.

Carlos had a twin sister, Josephine Cecil, who died a few days after birth.

ANGELINA SANTOS VALLARTA: Accounting professor at FEU for 40 years still has a sharp mind and a strong, clear voice with which to sing "Dahil Sa Iyo" on her 100th birthday. RANDY HORMILLOSA

The children who remained in the country are Vida, who is married to Tirso Fausto, and Victor, the youngest, who is married to Marichu Golez.

Mama Yeyeng has 12 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. Two of the great grandchildren are twins, born only on Dec. 6 in the US to Carlos' daughter Malyn.

Carlos said his mother was not a stay-at-home type when they were growing up but she managed the home well and oversaw the children's education.

Accounting professor

She did not marry young, marrying Carlos Velarde Vallarta, a native of Nueva Ecija, at age 30 only after she had finished her degree, had become a CPA and was already an accounting professor at the Far Eastern University.

"At an age when most women stayed home after high school, she pursued her studies at the University of the Philippines where she graduated with honors and earned the distinction of being the second woman certified public accountant in the Philippines," Carlos said in her speech.

"She became a professor in accounting at the Far Eastern University at the age of 28, teaching there for 40 years until her retirement at age 68," he said.

Her Matimyas home is filled with pictures: her wedding picture in which she is shown wearing the first Ramon Valera gown and carrying a bouquet of her favorite calla lilies; the wedding pictures of her children, some of whom were wed abroad; more pictures of her children and grandchildren; and many more pictures of her with husband, Carling, who died in 1973.

'Dahil Sa Iyo'

"They were always together," said Mila Vallarta of her mother and father.

Mila said her mother loved to dance and sing. She had taken voice lessons from the renowned diva Jovita Fuentes.

She could belt out a mean rendition of "Viuda Alegre," one of her favorite songs, as well as other Spanish songs even when she was already in her 90s. In fact, at her 100th birthday party, she sang "Dahil Sa Iyo" with a clear voice.

She can also draw and paint. Detailed drawings and paintings of flowers, done on silk and paper now brown with age, hang in the living room. These works were done as school projects when Mama Yeyeng was still in high school at Sta. Isabel College.

In the Matimyas house, two girls solicitously attend to Mama Yeyeng's needs. One of them, Helen Vides, was only 16 when she first came from Bicol to work for Mama Yeyeng. She's now 36 and has not married.

Mila said her mother believes that she would die on a date with the number 2 because the number was prominent in her birth date, 12-02-02.

"If one day, she has to go, we hope she will not suffer any pain," says Mila whose one wish is that when the time comes, her mother would go peacefully.

The most important lesson Mama Yeyeng's children learned from her was the value of maintaining close family ties, despite the distance, and getting a good education, said Mila.

This is what they have imparted to their children and grandchildren, she said.

2003. THE PERFECT TIME TO TALK ABOUT A MAN WHO WAS GOOD AT MAKING PEOPLE SPEND THEIR MONEY.

His name is William Bernbach. And he invented the wheel of persuasion.

He was brighter than most people. More observant than most people. And more articulate.

In 1932, he began his career at the Schenley Distillers Company as an officeboy in the mailroom.

In addition to delivering the mail and reading the poetry of Kahlil Gibran, he wrote an ad for Schenley's American Cream Whiskey and made sure it got to Schenley's advertising department.

And so began Bill's career of persuasion.

A few years later, Bill joined Grey Advertising as a copywriter. Soon after, he became vice-president and creative director.

But this story is not about what Bill became. It's about what he changed.

You see, up to this point in time, people generally thought they knew a thing or two about advertising.

They thought selling products was a science. You follow a formula, you sell a product. If a piece of advertising looks and reads a certain way, people will respond. If it doesn't, they won't.

Two years after Bill joined Grey Advertising, he wrote this letter to the owners. It's bold. It's brash. It's visionary. It's a wake-up call.

Here is a portion of it.

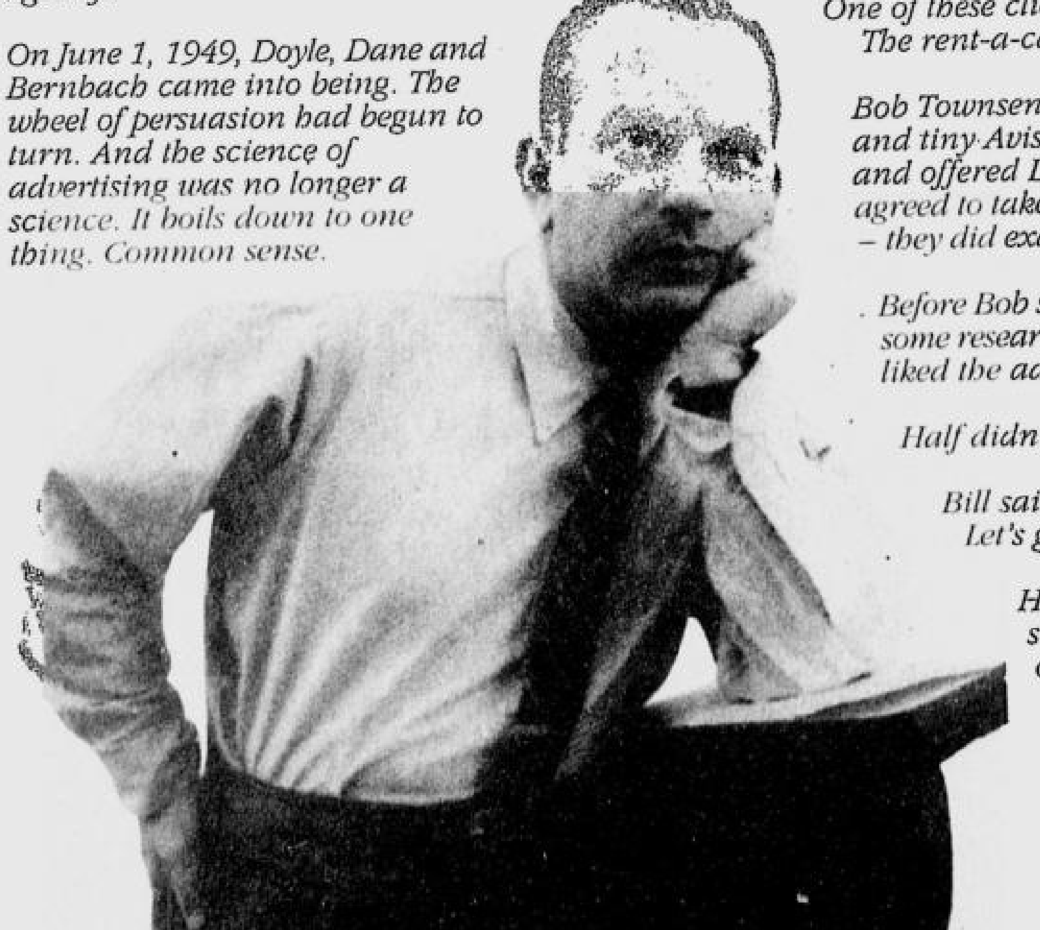
"There are a lot of great technicians in advertising. And unfortunately they talk the best game. They know all the rules. They can tell you that people in an ad will get you greater readership. They can tell you that a sentence should be this short or that long. They can tell you that body copy should be broken up for easier and more inviting reading. They can give you fact after fact. They are the scientists of advertising. But there is one little rub. Advertising is fundamentally persuasion and persuasion happens to be not a science, but an art."

It was the prologue to the creative revolution.

For obvious reason, the management of Grey never responded to this letter. So Bill did what any man with a few revolutionary ideas would do.

He found two other men with similar revolutionary ideas and started his own advertising agency.

On June 1, 1949, Doyle, Dane and Bernbach came into being. The wheel of persuasion had begun to turn. And the science of advertising was no longer a science. It boils down to one thing. Common sense.



Bill and his colleagues knew that advertising doesn't create a better product. It merely conveys it.

They also knew that the truth isn't the truth until people believe you. And they can't believe you unless they know what you are saying.

And they can't know what you are saying unless they are listening to you.

And they won't listen to you unless you are interesting.

And you won't be interesting unless you say things freshly, originally and imaginatively.

And until you realize this, you won't persuade a single person to spend his hard-earned cash. You won't change people's minds.

To better understand how all this works, let us look at how Bill worked. And how clients worked with him.

Let's start with something we all know. The Volkswagen Beetle.

Volkswagen advertising is unique in the history of automobile advertising. If not all advertising.

Bill saw the Volkswagen car for what it was. Honest, simple, reliable, sensible and different.

And he wanted the advertising to be that way, too.

Of course, the temptations and pressures to do "mainstream" car advertising were considerable. Bill's resistance was greater.

"The product. The product. Stay with the product." These were his words.

So that's exactly what the folks at DDB did.

Every Volkswagen Beetle ad that followed spoke about one thing only. The Volkswagen Beetle.

And as you might have guessed, the advertising was honest, simple, reliable, sensible and different.

The man-in-the-street had no problem relating to it. The manufacturing and advertising philosophy became one and the same.

The influential trade magazine Advertising Age even commented, "When Shakespeare wrote, "Get thee to a nunnery, did you go? Of course not. But you bought a Volkswagen, didn't you?"

By this time, DDB was firmly established. Clients were coming to them.

One of these clients was Avis. The rent-a-car company.

Bob Townsend, the president of the new and tiny Avis came around to see Bill, and offered DDB the Avis account. Bill agreed to take them on. On one condition – they did exactly what he recommended.

Before Bob saw the campaign, there was some research done to see whether people liked the advertising or not.

Half didn't. Half did.

Bill said, "That's the half we want. Let's go with it."

He was wary of the trend to submit everything to the altar of research.

"We are so busy measuring public opinion that we forget we can mold it. We are so busy listening to statistics we forget we can create them," Bill observed.

Business, after all, is about taking risks.

He truly believed that if you stand for something, you always find some people for you and some against you. If you stand for nothing, you will find nobody against you, and nobody for you.

When Bob Townsend saw the finished campaign, he was a little nervous. In fact, very nervous. But he kept his word.

The now legendary "We're only number 2, but we try harder" campaign ran without any changes.

Yes, it was brutally honest. But it was also a damn good argument. The competition couldn't argue back.

The public saw the truth in Avis advertising and they liked what they saw. Overnight, Avis was on the map.

By now you probably have an idea of how Bill Bernbach worked. How he persuaded men and women. And why the wheel worked in his favor.

You can clearly see that his creative philosophy isn't some how-to book on making advertising.

It is a comprehensive look at human beings. He simply knew what people wanted.

But Bill and his colleagues couldn't claim all the credit for DDB's success. A large part of it was due to their clients.

One client who was outraged by the false claims of his competitor, said "Bill, we'll show him. I've got a great gimmick. Let's tell the truth."

DDB's clients knew that the creative well dries up when they impose rules on the advertising agency. Like Bill, they believed that the memorable never emerged from a formula. So they didn't make any.

They knew that there would be a time when no headline is proper and there would be a time when a headline is proper. There would be a time when using a logo is the worst thing in the world you can do.

They knew if you have not crystallized into a single purpose, a single theme, what you want to tell the reader, you cannot be creative. You cannot persuade.

They knew that good advertising wouldn't make a bad product better. It would only end up killing it.

They knew that knowledge is ultimately available to everyone, and the only thing that's yours and yours alone, is a great idea memorably expressed. No one can ever take that from you.

Bill died of leukemia on October 2, 1982. But every DDB office around the world, including the one that wrote this still turns the wheel he invented.

For inquiries on how we can help you propel your brands a step higher and turn the wheel of fortune into your favor, please call Roy Santiago, Chief Operating Officer at DDB Makati (8672642/8674376), Manny Gutierrez, Managing Director at DDB Ortigas (6352171).

A Bright New Year Greeting From Your Business Partner, DDB Philippines.

Eugenia D. Apostol
Founding Chairman

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OPINION

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The good and the bad

EDITORIAL

IT was not exactly the best of times, but 2002 was not the worst of times either.

The year that began with a lot of talk about coup attempts, following the slaying of the self-styled spokesman of the Young Officers Union, saw such threats quickly dissipating like the hot air that they really were. Despite the fervent wishes of the government's detractors, nothing came to pass that approximated the upheavals that had brought down the presidency of Joseph Estrada late in January 2001 and rocked the new administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo three months later.

But while Ms Macapagal was able to strengthen her grip on the presidency, peace and order remained a serious problem. Terrorists exploded bombs in the cities of Zamboanga, General Santos and Caloocan, killing more than two dozen people, and spooked the embassies of Canada and Australia to close shop. But the violent and often brutal Abu Sayyaf seem to have been driven deep into their forest hideaways. Cases of kidnapping rose in the first half of the year, but the number seems to have tapered off in the second half. Ms Macapagal went high profile with her shame campaign against criminals, causing concern about violations of their human rights, especially the presumption of innocence. But there were some significant achievements, particularly in the campaign against illegal drugs which saw government confiscating several billions of pesos worth of shabu.

Economic problems, however, proved to be a tough nut to crack. Oil prices have been going up, boosted by fears of war in Iraq and later the political turbulence in Venezuela. Interest rates may be down, but so are investments. The rate of joblessness has reached double-digit and the budget deficit has exceeded P200 billion, way above the P135-billion target the administration set for itself at the beginning of the year.

On the other hand, exports are going up much faster than it was last year, inflation has remained low and the economy has been expanding. With the growth rate of the gross national product expected to hit at least 4.5 percent for the whole year, the Philippines is outperforming most of its neighbors.

But even as Filipinos have started to rate economics as their first concern, politics and scandal continued to be a major distraction. In the last few weeks of the year, Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez and his allies in the House of Representatives hogged the front pages both with their charges of pay-offs to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and their antics that were designed to delay his extradition to the United States where he is facing more than 40 criminal charges.

Scandals inherited from previous administrations like the Impsa deal, the Piatco contract and the grossly overpriced President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard managed somehow to tar the Macapagal administration with the same brush—although unfairly. But all is fair in love and war, and politics in this country is all-out war.

Now the President has taken herself out as a target of political sniping by declaring she would not stand for reelection in 2004. That should put her above partisan politics, at least for the whole of 2003. Although welcomed by many as an act of statesmanship, it remains to be seen whether, freed of the burden of politics, she will henceforth deal more decisively with the many problem facing the nation. The Filipino people will certainly be better served by a President who decides according to her lights and without thought of how her decision will affect her chances of winning election.

A long war

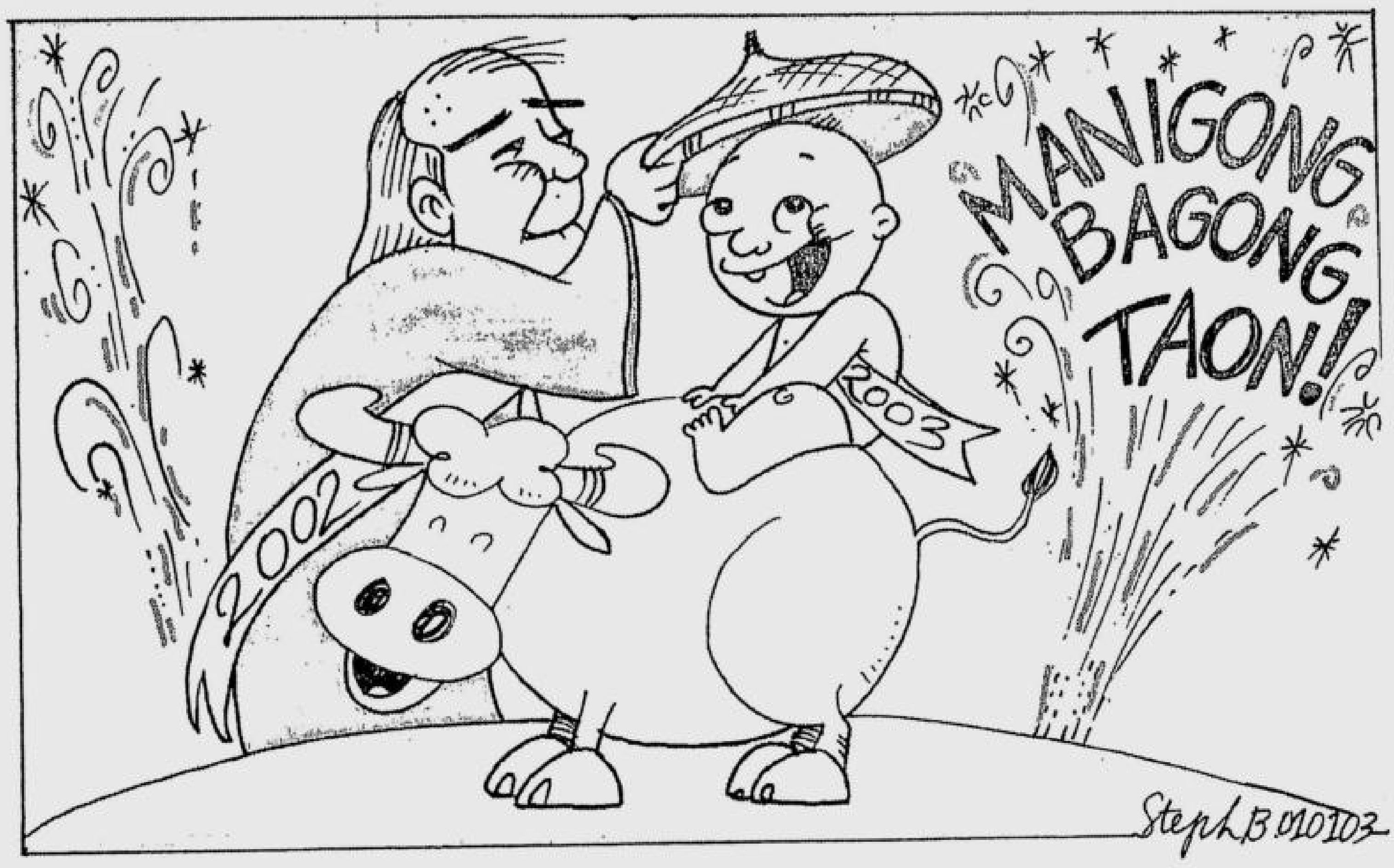
FOREIGN COMMENT

IN THE EYES of Osama bin Laden, France still carries the sin of having, like Great Britain, oppressed Muslims—in Algeria then in the Middle East.

Our country is also a breeding ground. The presence of six million Muslims allows al-Qaida to recruit plenty of militants, who, living in the very heart of enemy territory, are difficult to catch before they act.

Communism, which claimed to be converting the world with Marx and the Red Army just as Osama bin Laden wants to have it submit to the law of the Koran, finished by collapsing. But when facing an Islamic enemy without a flag or borders, victory will demand even more patience and determination. France may be finding itself engaged in a hundred years' war.

Le Figaro (Paris)



No president, except Marcos, has been reelected

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE New Year, in spite of all the doom and gloom forecast, may turn out all right after all, it was greeted by the best news we have ever had in decades. It is good news not because President Gloria Macapangal-Arroyo will not run anymore for the 2004 presidential election but because a president forsook her ambition for the good of the country.

Naturally, those who are clinging to her skirt for their jobs were shocked. What will happen to them now? Without her, they are nothing. In an instant, they have all become lame ducks.

There are three ways to look at the president's announcement:

1. That she is sincere; that what she did is the highest act of statesmanship. This is what I would like to believe.

2. That she had no choice. She knew she was going to lose anyway, so why bother running?

3. That it is a trick to get the opposition hounds off her neck; that she would change her mind sometime and run after all.

Let's start with number 2.

In the history of the post-commonwealth Philippines, no president has ever been reelected. None except Marcos—and look what happened to him.

While the 2004 election is not, technically, a reelection for GMA—her not having been elected in the first place; she only took over the term of Erap—it is in effect a reelection. Therefore she already has a built-in disadvantage.

The Filipino people are a demanding constituency. And they are disappointed quickly. A president may be elected with a landslide and be the darling of the people for the first several months. The people expect him to be their savior who will solve all their problems. No president can do that, and the people are quickly disenchanted, disgruntled and discontented with their president. They look for a replacement who they believe would be able to solve all their problems, only to be disappointed again after he assumes office. It has been like that through the years.

GMA's own father, President Diosdado Macapagal, was a victim of that syndrome. He was a good president; he launched land reform and renegotiated the bases treaty with the United States, but he was trounced resoundingly by Marcos. That lesson could not have escaped the mind of Gloria. The surveys clearly showed she is losing popularity, landing a dismal fourth among the presidential aspirants.

With that prospect, why waste time, energy and enormous amounts of money to wage a campaign she would lose anyway? Be practical and cut your losses. That's the smart thing to do. Politics is gambling, and as in real gambling, when you are losing steadily today, you quit to be able to return again tomorrow when your luck may have changed.

So could it be a trick? With her no longer a candidate, the opposition would let up on her and concentrate their attack on potential rivals. Opposition members will pounce on one another and leave GMA watching from the sidelines, above the turmoil. What's to stop her from changing her mind? She can always claim the people are clamoring for her and how can she turn her back on the voice of the people. Her own father did that, saying early on that he won't run for the presidency, later changing his mind, saying he was heeding the clamor of the people.

Of course she can always change her mind. And many of her running dogs who will lose their positions and perks when she is no longer President will try to make her change her mind. Which was why she did not consult anybody outside her immediate family. She knew people who depended on her for their positions would try to change her mind.

She can still change her mind, but I would like to believe—although my journalistic nose has trained me to be skeptical—that she sincerely wants to make a difference to the people. That she prefers a good place in history rather than run for another term and risk losing.

She is right when she said that being a candidate makes all her actions suspect. People think that whatever she does is to boost her chances at the 2004 polls. As a candidate, she has to make compromises. She has to keep political warlords happy. She has to grant the deals campaign contributors are lobbying for. She has to close her eyes while her closest political aides wallow in corruption. Plus there is always the ambitious in the military waiting for their chance to grab power.

With her above politics, she can do what she thinks is right, even the unpopular things. She would not be hostage to politicians and vested interests. She would be above the fray of those fighting for the presidency. In effect, she is saying: "If that is what being President is like, then you can shove it."

She may have a short term, but if she can do what she intends to do in the 18 months that are left of the term, then she may well be hailed as the best president we ever had. She will have assured for herself a shining place in history.

Besides, her sitting it out in the 2004 elections does not bar her from running for the 2008 presidential elections. If she does well in the remaining years of her term, and her successor makes a mess of the government, there will be such a clamor for her return that she can have the presidency again, legitimately, on a silver platter.

More mysteries

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER once writing a column about people wanting to have a sixth sense. I think it was at about this time of year when fortune-tellers were crawling out of the woodwork to alert the world on what lay in store for it in the coming year. Some friends and kin were saying how wonderful it would be if we all possessed that gift—assuming it was true, though some seers' predictions seemed pretty uncanny—and could see into the future.

Or if we had other powers associated with a sixth sense, like being able to read people's minds, being able to move objects, being able to know what's happening to kin and friends without benefit of cell phone or e-mail. Of course the downside of being that "sensitive," as someone suggested, is that you could also be exposed to things you do not particularly like. As that kid said in "Sixth Sense," "I see dead people." Maybe if dead people showed themselves to us in their pristine form, it wouldn't be so bad. But they tend to do it with the special-effects ravaging of the grave, tattered flesh and all.

Well, who doesn't want a sixth sense if it can be had? But I don't know why we keep craving another sense when it's all we can do to use the ones we already have. I'm sure we use our eyes, ears, smell, taste and touch in our daily lives, but I don't know that we use it as fully as we say we would a sixth sense if we had it.

"You look," Sherlock Holmes, always liked to tell Dr. Watson, "but you do not see." What applies to clues applies to other aspects of life as well. How many people have stopped dead in their tracks, their mouths agape, from being stunned by a glowing sunset? Or less beautifully but more truthfully, how many people have stopped dead in their tracks, their breath taken away from them, by the sight of a kid with glazed eyes sprawled on the sidewalk, his senses gutted by the fumes of rugby?

How many people hear the whisper of the wind on the eaves of old houses, or demolished shanties, or the silent screams of the loveless or abandoned? How many people smell the overpowering perfume and even more overpowering piety of those who kneel on pews in churches and the overpowering odor of selfishness and the even more overpowering stench of greed? How many people know the taste of rain on the tongue or the bitter-sweet pangs of first (or last) love? How many people who haul their bedraggled carcasses out of bed at the crack of dawn and wait in waiting sheds under the rain or shine for the bus to lumber by can still feel?

Like I said, what do you want to have a sixth sense for when you can't use the five you've already got?

There's a variation to this, which I've come across these last few days. It struck me in the course of people talking about the movies we've been having recently. Those movies are the fantasy types, the local ones being "Agimat ni Lolo," which has been making a killing in the tills, and "Alamat ng Lawin," "Lastik Man," and the latest version of "Spirit Warriors," none of which has been doing badly either. The foreign one is of course "The Two Towers," the second installment of the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, which everyone has been waiting for, including me, a dyed-in-the-wool Tolkienite.

Someone was just saying how wonderful the human mind is, and how powerful the human imagination is to be able to discover new worlds, or invent them; to be able to penetrate mysteries, or pose them; to be able to imagine the unimaginable, or conjure them; it was a fantastic gift. Of course not all of us have it. It was reserved for people like J.R.R. Tolkien, or Edgar Rice Burroughs (creator of Tarzan, and for aficionados, John Carter, Warlord of Mars), and George Lucas. And closer to home Mars Ravelo and the other writers of *komiks*, who made fantasy a living reality for us.

I got to thinking: Of course it would be great if all of us had an imagination as restless or boundless as these people do. But as you grow older, you realize that there is an even stranger and more mysterious world than the ones these people have conjured or dreamed up. There is a terrain that remains largely unknown or unmapped despite the many voyages of exploration that people have undertaken to discover it. There is a mystery that has not been solved despite the many sleuths that have endeavored to unravel it. It is a world, or terrain, or mystery that requires an even bigger imagination to intuit, it is a world, or terrain, or mystery that requires a more acute intuition to sense.

That is the world, or terrain, or mystery of the human heart.

If you've ever tried writing a story, you'll know that the hardest thing to create is not an unearthly and surreal landscape, it is a very earthly and tangible character. The hardest thing to know is not the unfamiliar, it is the familiar. The hardest thing to penetrate is not what lies outside of us but what lies inside of us. The hardest thing to understand is not aliens from outer space, it is people from daily life.

But you do not need to write a story to grasp this. You need only live. The most mysterious person in your life is not the stranger who has just moved into the neighborhood. It is your spouse or partner or lover, whose moods you cannot fathom. It is the son or daughter you have whose life you cannot understand, and whom you are no longer able to talk to. It is you yourself, whose past eludes you and whose future is vague as the vapors of Venus. You grow older and you realize how very little you really know about the people closest to you—and yourself. The hardest thing to glimpse is not the landscape of alien worlds, it is the contours of the human heart.

Well, truth has always been stranger than fiction. Life has always been stranger than art.

Happy New Year, everyone.

Renewal or sudden death

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE STUNNING announcement on Dec. 30, Rizal Day, of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that she will not stand for reelection in 2004 is the equivalent of the abdication of the throne in the British monarchy. Whatever reasons drove the President to step down, her decision has acquired a historic ring.

No Filipino president has ever climbed down from office voluntarily. On the contrary, some of them tried to extend their term. Among them was former President Fidel Ramos who sought to extend his single six-year term through a constitutional amendment and failed. When our presidents had a four-year term, with reelection, no one failed to seek a second term. Diosdado Macapagal and Carlos Garcia lost in their reelection bids. Some died in office—Manuel Quezon, Manuel Roxas and Ramon Magsaysay. Joseph Estrada was deposed. But giving up the presidential office voluntarily, that had not happened until President Macapagal announced her retirement in 2004.

President Macapagal overturned tradition. This is why she can claim that her retirement in 2004 is a "sacrifice." Since she succeeded Estrada through the constitutional route as vice president after Estrada's administration collapsed, President Macapagal was merely completing Estrada's term and there was no constitutional bar to seeking a full six-year term. She had the road clear ahead of her, except that road was going to be bumpy and full of landmines.

The President, according to those close to her, had been considering the option of not standing in 2004 for the past six months. The factors that nagged her included the legacy of rebellion and divisiveness that she inherited after she took over from Estrada, the gridlock in Congress in which several key reform measures were held up in the Senate, underlining the failure of attaining executive consensus with the legislature; the poisoned political atmosphere in which her detractors and the opposition did not give her quarter in seeking opportunities to disclose scandals over alleged corruption; the pervasive perception that all her important political and economic decisions were made to enhance her electoral chances in 2004; and the specter of her falling popularity ratings and business confidence index in 2002.

The President did not consult her political leaders or associates on her abdication in 2004. She consulted her family. It was mainly a family decision. The decision was so unexpected and surprising because all indications had pointed to an irreversible drive to seek reelection, in keeping with Filipino tradition that once the president is in power, she or he never gives it up, governed only by the tenure mandate of the Constitution.

In breaching this tradition, President Macapagal defined her own niche in Philippine politics. To say that the President's announcement was a gambit for future political gain or comeback or a big gamble is to indulge in the normal cynicism prevailing in Philippine politics. If she reverses her decision at some point before 2004, she can be pinned down on her words. If the decision were a gambit, there can be no more reckless and credibility-shattering gamble than this. Her Dec. 30 statement is clear and unequivocal. Previous presidents had hedged on their reelection ambitions.

Obviously, the President agonized over her decision. She realized that if her agenda for political reforms and economic recovery can be implemented, she had to remove herself from the center of political contention, rise above it and put herself above suspicion of politicking for 2004. By breaking through these constraints, she has seized the high ground from which to devote the last one and a half years of her presidency to being a non-partisan leader.

There is not much time left to do much before 2004. She has been in office for just two years. During the past two years, nothing has moved much in terms of achieving a consensus in the legislative agenda. She has been found wanting in political skills in forging consensus—a skill most pronounced in the presidency of Fidel Ramos, who won with only 25 percent of the vote. Much of the stalemate stemmed from GMA's confrontational and immature political skills to win opponents to her side.

In economic management, she has done better and has a surer grasp, allowing the economy to grow better than neighboring economies. In foreign affairs, she has been most confident, but she also wanted to build a foundation upon which to launch a successful campaign for the presidency. This foundation never materialized—partly because of reasons she described in her statement of Dec. 30.

The possibility also loomed that she would lose ignominiously in 2004, if we are to go by her falling popularity ratings in 2002. Poll ratings alone can be reversed. They are volatile. Every president has his/her ups and down in popularity, and she could probably reverse the ratings. But the ratings, together with the other factors I have cited above, brought pressure to bear on her that hacking it through 2004 was the least desirable option to get things done in one and a half years in terms of political and economic reforms.

She has to tell the people that if reforms will have a chance to survive, she has to commit political suicide by not running again in 2004. The choice has narrowed between the life and renewal of our political culture or her sudden death. She chose sudden death. With her detachment from the bruising electoral contentions of 2004, President Macapagal has regained the initiative to run this country, according to what she believes is good for it, and not what is good for her in 2004.

An environmental report

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE FIRST day of the year is about as good a time as any to reflect on the state of the environment.

Though environmental concerns have lately become the chic advocacy of choice, as a nation we've really been living in denial about the environment. We have enacted the best and most comprehensive laws penalizing environmental destruction, but implementation remains spotty, with government officials among the worst offenders.

Quite a waker-upper, then, is this "state of the Philippine environment" report written by Jose Ma. Lorenzo "Lory" Tan of World Wildlife Fund Philippines, which I'm reprinting in two parts. It not only succinctly and convincingly depicts a coming environmental Armageddon, it also offers ways for us to respond to the crisis.

A Happy New Year to all readers—and may our world and may our country be a better place to live in not just in 2003 but for generations to come!

* * *

IN THE 1980s, a study made by teams of marine experts, revealed that 60 percent of Philippine reefs were unhealthy, with a fish biomass estimated at less than 15 tons per square kilometer. About 15 percent was relatively healthy, with a fish biomass between 15 to 30 tons per square kilometer. Barely 5 percent was in excellent shape. That was close to 15 years ago. With dynamite, cyanide and other forms of illegal fishing still being reported throughout the country, can the national coral reef situation be better today?

The World Fish Center revealed in 2001 that 90 percent of the fish stock that existed just after the Pacific War has been consumed. A year ago, we had barely 10 percent of our fish stocks left in our oceans and coasts. With radar, sonar, GPS, the use of fine-meshed nets and progressive fishing gear, commercial fishing fleets have become more efficient. A rapid assessment of fisheries targeting primary predators such as sharks and marine mammals, revealed that these animals that play a profound role in the maintenance of our oceanic food chain are being hunted throughout the Philippines. This major disruption in the ocean's ability to restore itself is only making the situation worse. Population pressures and our drastically reduced fish stocks have led to this. Can there be less of a threat today?

Fifty percent of Filipinos depend on seafood as a primary source of protein. More than 50 percent of all Philippine municipalities are located along the coastline.

* * *

IN 1999, a study made by the Environmental Science for Social Change revealed that in barely 95 years, we have logged 95 percent of the forests that stood at the turn of the century. As a result of this, barely 15 percent forest cover is left, nationwide. And barely 600,000 hectares of old growth forest is left—from a starting figure of 22 million hectares at the turn of the century. The logging of narra, almaciga, lauan, tanguile, molave and other forest trees continues, even within protected areas.

The remaining forest performs a number of functions. They are watersheds, providing us with the water we need to live and raise crops. They are filters and carbon sequesters, cleaning the air we breathe and drawing carbon dioxide to mitigate climate change. With logging continuing in the few remaining forests, their capacity to perform these functions for human populations is reduced on a daily basis. Philippine Eagles, fruit bats, wild pigs, deer, crocodiles and other key species that make a significant impact on the health of forest ecosystems, continue to be poached. In Cartimar and even along national highways, birds, monitor lizards, snakes and a variety of wildlife that contribute to maintaining balance in our forests and wetlands, are sold openly and without sanction.

* * *

OUR population now approaches 82 million. Within 35 years, our population will double. The needs for water, clean air and food will double as well. Clearly, this is a major challenge. Supply is decreasing, demand is increasing. Everyone is afraid to say that we must generate effective ways to manage population. The Catholic Church, like all religions, has the right and the responsibility to uphold its beliefs and standards of morality. It is irresponsible, however, for any group or organization to impose half-baked standards that offer no clearcut solutions, and only lead to greater, systemic problems. This is an abdication of social responsibility. It is not authentic stewardship, in any sense of the word.

It is inappropriate, callous and probably immoral to simply dismiss these facts and say that we will import or buy the food we need. With what? We have no money. And what about water? Will be buying that, too? Paddy cultivation utilizes close to 4,000 liters of water to produce one kilo of rice. With El Niños becoming more frequent, and with our reduced watersheds, where will we get the water? No amount of new water impounding systems will do the job. First, you need water. And how about clean air? Can we buy air? Will everyone be walking around with gas masks?

Think about the millions of hardworking parents who spend everything they earn on their children. Think about the billions set aside and spent for education, nutrition, clothing, shelter, insurance, health, entertainment. Unless we invest equivalent amounts on restoring our environment, making sure that the essentials for life—food, fresh water and clean air—are available to all, the endless hours of sacrifice and hard work which are devoted by Filipino parents to building a decent future for their children will go down the drain.

(More tomorrow)

Strange resonance in the words of Aguinaldo and Arroyo

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

EVERYONE is still talking about the President's Rizal Day speech in Baguio. Her announcement that she will not run in the presidential elections of 2004 diverted attention from professional nitpickers who would have made an issue of her decision to celebrate Rizal Day in Baguio rather than endure the "traditional" ceremony in Manila. For the second year, the President has led the flag-raising and wreath-laying on Rizal Day in Baguio. Of course, this is infinitely better than Erap who did not show up at Rizal Park one year, and the lame excuse given by his spokesman was that Rizal Day was not in his official schedule. Really? Independence Day 2002 had the "traditional" flag-raising in Manila, but the President led the rites from Mindanao. I hope that without discarding the ceremonies at Rizal Park the President will always take the time to raise the flag in Mindanao or the Visayas, anywhere but "traditional" Manila, if only to stress the point that Rizal and Independence Days are for the entire country and not a monopoly of the capital.

Although they look like men with hearty appetites, Senate President Franklin Drilon and MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando could not finish their Rizal Day breakfast in the National Historical Institute because their meal was interrupted repeatedly by radio stations asking for a comment on the President's Baguio speech. While everyone was talking of the present and the future the historian in me looked back to Christmas 1898 when Emilio Aguinaldo resigned as president of the Philippines. He asked his countrymen for a very strange *"aguinaldo,"* he asked them to accept his resignation. Naturally, many of those around him asked him to stay. The printed leaflets announcing his resignation were gathered and destroyed but a few of these survived, making us see self-sacrifice a century ago. While the conditions of 1898 are different from that of 2003 some of Aguinaldo's words have an eerie resonance:

"You are all well aware that there is no office superior to that of the President of the nation; he is honored, he is obeyed, he is the superior of all, distinct from all other eminent personages, so that public order is dependent upon him; one can desire nothing better; if he is to perform his duty rigidly of watching over the welfare of the nation, no other office is to be compared with it; but if he uses it as a means to further personal interests, there is no better office by which to obtain great wealth in a short time."

"Consequently it is well to deliberate thoroughly concerning the new President we are to proclaim. His previous history should be traced step by step, aside from his present behavior; our votes should not be cast for a candidate whose character has not been previously investigated and thoroughly known; and if we cannot refuse his solicitation, we can feign acquiescence and when the time for action comes elect the one who deserves the office, for the choice must not fall on anyone by whom the country would be imperiled."

"To be wise is not enough, for a man may be wise and not be willing to share the fate of the country when in peril, either because he is wise, or rather, perhaps because he may be called wise. To be rich is not enough, for there are rich men and this is so in the majority of cases, who although they see their country threatened by re-enslavement, are unwilling to aid with their wealth, just as though they did not notice the danger. And why? Because of these very riches and in case of any mishap they will repair to a foreign land. It is true that they have made contributions of war and have subscribed to the national loan, but many have not given more than a thousandth part of their entire fortune, when they very well know that the strength [of] the Archipelago is in their hands, and they are the very ones who can hasten the recognition of our government, when in the sight of other nations we are thus reinforced. They know that in the majority of revolutions in any nation the rich men have been the leaders in the struggle to attain independence, but here the contrary has been true, for the poor men have taken precedence. Still, however, when we talk with these men, they seem very patriotic; let us not be impatient with them; the day will come when for our own well-being we may see their entire cooperation for it cannot be denied that they are Filipinos…but in time to come, imbued with patriotism, the contrary will happen, because they will go abroad and when they have accumulated sufficiently, they will return to the country.

"There are some men who aspire to important positions now and cannot agree to mount though lower grades. What does a man like this desire chiefly? Ah, his own welfare, and not that of the people. Also another man likes in fact such positions, but pretends not to care for them, when the truth is, he is seeking means to gradually advance his warmest partisans so as to insure his own election, although his partisans understand what he is only acting in his own interests. I am justified in saying to you that much care is required in dealing with these people."

As we enter a new year we must remember that while we cannot escape history, we can, at least, not repeat it.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

The second war against Iraq

COMMENTARY

Art Villasanta

SHOULD it come to a fight, the second Persian Gulf War will prove if the United States has reached a sophistication capable of achieving the perfection of military strategy: Attaining victory with a minimum of fighting.

Washington's strident saber-rattling; the pre-positioning of its armed forces in the theater of conflict, its stepped up aerial attacks on Iraq's anti-air defenses and a not too stealthy campaign to remove Saddam by "other means" (such as a bullet in his brain) appear to me as more indicative of its intent to win victory with the least fighting than as imminent preparations for a lightning war.

The United States seems bent on frightening Saddam into submission by threatening his life and promising the overwhelming destruction of his armed forces, which is the foundation of his power. Saddam's surrender without the need of combat would achieve the United States' military aim of overthrowing him and dealing a serious blow against international terrorism.

That would be the best result possible for a world alarmed by the economic disaster that might result from a prolonged war against Iraq. It might also be the world's best in win-win solutions.

Should Washington's campaign to unseat Saddam without resorting to war fail, however, the Allies should be able to destroy the Iraqi army in about a week, according to Western analysts. Former US president Bill Clinton has said that he'd be surprised if the Iraqi army lasted more than three days.

No pushover

But war plans rarely go according to plan in war and the Iraqi armed forces might not be the pushover it appears on paper. And, of course, there is the threat of Iraq's still invisible WMD (weapons of mass destruction) that determined UN weapons inspectors have been unable to uncover despite a month of intense effort.

Although suggesting that wars are fought to minimize fighting appears astounding (or totally absurd), this view does hew to military logic and does have historical precedents. The perfection of strategy, as the noted British military thinker Sir Basil Liddell Hart pointed out in his famous body of work about warfare, "would...be to produce a decision without any serious fighting."

The aim of (the) strategy, he said, "...must be to bring about this battle under the most advantageous circumstances. And the more advantageous the circumstances, the less, proportionately, will be the fighting.

"The perfection of strategy would be, therefore, to produce a decision without serious fighting. History...provides examples where strategy, helped by favorable conditions, has virtually produced such a result."

Decisive example

A decisive example of the perfection of strategy was the German Army's blitzkrieg against France and the Low Countries from May to June 1940. The Wehrmacht's six-week campaign led to the conquest of western Europe at extremely low cost: 60,000 casualties against an Allied loss of more than one million men.

I cited this example with no intention of drawing parallels between Nazi Germany's campaign to dominate Europe and Washington's current effort to unseat a maniacal dictator. What I sought to emphasize was that clever strategy can achieve decisive battlefield victories no matter who its originator.

Liddell Hart was an apostle of this perfection of strategy, which he termed the "strategy of the indirect approach." It is a strategy that uses political, psychological and physical means to attain victory with a minimum of fighting.

In looking at the options available to Washington, it is apparent that the most favorable outcome for the Allies would be Saddam's removal before any war takes place. The second most favorable outcome would be the rapid defeat of the Iraqi armed forces, if possible, through the strategy of the indirect approach.

A cursory look at the map, however, shows the immense problems faced by Allied planners. The only invasion route into Iraq available now is by Kuwait, which lies southeast of Iraq.

Grim prospect

The Iraq-Kuwait border is just over a hundred miles in length, making any Allied attack on Iraq a frontal one. Without Saudi Arabia agreeing to the use of its territory to launch flank attacks on Iraq, the Allies are faced with the grim prospect of assaulting prepared Iraqi defensive positions along the most obvious invasion routes. Should Iraq decide to make a determined stand on its border, the battle to ram into Iraq might prove too bloody despite Allied superiority in armor and advanced weaponry.

Once clear of the border, however, the Allies will have free rein into Iraq. An early stand by the Iraqi army at the border will only lead to its early destruction.

Iraq, on the other hand, appears to favor a strategy of trading space for time, much like the Russians did against the Germans in World War 2. It might give up territory to conserve its military strength and try to inflict as many casualties on the Allies as possible. Winning against the Allies is out of the question.

Iraq will seek to prolong its battlefield resistance to further weaken the United States and world economy and to inflame the morale of Muslim radicals around the globe. That Iraqi media has made much of defending Baghdad and other strategic centers indicate this might be the most profitable strategy for Saddam.

The Allies lost some 1,000 men and women in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, popularly known as Operation Desert Storm. Doubtless that Saddam is eager to increase the Allies' bill for conquering Iraq a second time.

Of course, my armchair generalship might be 360 degrees off the mark, but the reality of terrain as it now stands seems to favor a head-on assault by the Allies. The spring of 2003 has been bandied about as the most favorable time for any attack but that now seems unreasonable since UN weapons inspectors will remain in Iraq until early 2003.

With the loss of the favorable campaign season, the Allies are left with the difficult choice of either isolating Iraq until late 2003 or early 2004 or fighting in the intense summer heat next year. The UN attacked Iraq on Jan. 16, 1991 and forced an Iraqi surrender 100 days later.

The indirect approach, however, remains possible. In what form and where it must take place is up to Allied planners. It would be comforting to hope that Washington's top leadership will take into account that the true aim of the strategist "is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce a decision, its continuation by a battle is sure to achieve this. In other words, dislocation is the aim of strategy; its sequel may be either the enemy's dissolution or his easier disruption in battle."

But then, a few bullets in Baghdad might end this war before it begins.

Art Villasanta has created an Internet website about the Philippines' participation in the Korean War (www.geocities.com/peftok). He is currently writing a book about the Philippines' participation in the Korean War. He can be reached at anakpeftrok@mailcity.com

Work for the common good at last

Pagbabago@pilipinas recognizes the personal and political sacrifice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo made yesterday by announcing that she will not seek reelection in 2004. We believe this is an act of the highest form of statesmanship. At this point it is very important for the President to follow through on her promises to enact radical reform. The country can no longer afford another false start.

P@p supports any endeavor the President undertakes in the next 18 months that will truly result in meaningful, positive change. We urge our political leaders, especially those in the opposition, to now put petty partisan politics aside and to work for the common good. This is an opportunity for the Macapagal administration and the opposition to work together and regain lost credibility.

In particular, we expect from our political leaders a sincere and decisive effort in the coming months to combat corruption and poverty.

Pagbabago stands ready to do its part and we urge the political leadership, business community, civil society and religious leaders to work constructively to ensure the success of this unprecedented opportunity to finally do what is right.

May God bless the Philippines!

—VINCENT LAZATIN,
GUIDO DELGADO, BART GUINGONA,
MARIAN PASTOR ROCES, CIEL HABITO,
CHITO SALAZAR, Pagbabago@Pilipinas

Yearly obscenity

ONCE again, the public was treated with some kind of barbaric entertainment, to the delight of shrieking gays right on the campus of the University of the Philippines, a government institution charged with molding the minds of our youths to become model leaders of the country. The so-called oblation run is nothing but a display of dirty flesh by a group of cowards who covered their faces because they look like stray animals.

What have the respectable officials of the university done to prevent this yearly obscenity? The UP police and Quezon City PNP? These government officials could be liable for not doing anything.

—MAJ. BB MORATA (Ret) PC,
104 Chico St., Comembo,
Fort Bonifacio,
Makati City

The best President we ever had?

IN THE SPIRIT of the Christmas season and the New Year, let us allow Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos to "glory" in her belief that, her father, the late President Ferdinand Marcos, "was still the best president the country ever had." She added that, her father, who ruled the Philippines for 20 years, "achieved many things unparalleled by presidents before and after them." In effect, she belittled the achievements of Presidents Quezon, Osmeña, Laurel, Roxas et al.

No problem. What puzzles me is why she has not refuted the Guinness Book of World Records, which branded Marcos "as the biggest thief in the world." Perhaps as the "best president," Marcos should not have left the Filipino people believing that he enriched himself while in office. Well, Marcos surely was the best father to his family, for he did not leave his widow and children fending for themselves in difficult times, but provided for their future amply many times over.

—ADELFA L. ETRUISTE,
E.Glinoga Street,
Barangay Castillo,
Pitogo, Quezon

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Out of the Nation's Life

TO THE END, Rep. Mark Jimenez carried out his charade.

His statements to the media, augmented by a dejected photo, portrayed a man who was denied justice. But this justice can only be something that he failed to buy.

He may have fooled the likes of Reps. Willie Villarama and Didagen Dilangalen, but it's a good thing many of us see the real man behind his billions.

To us, his various ploys supported by his most loyal colleague, are utterly hilarious. Image, someone with links in Colombia who claims to have the capacity to dispense $2 million as "bribe money" and someone who got fired as the Vice President's chief of staff because of his alleged large amount of "*kupits*," establishing a website that will keep track of "white crimes" in the country.

Ha! Who are they kidding?

But for now, let us be denied entertainment and say goodbye to MJ. Hopefully he'll stay long enough (if not for good) in the United States so that those whose reputations be smeared can move on with their jobs.

And those of us not-so-willing witnesses to the MJ charade can get on with our lives, thinking that in our country, not all big fish can get away.

—CRISOSTOMO V. SAMONTE,
BF Homes, Parañaque City

A Batangueño's wish for Perez

WE hope that Justice Secretary Hernando Perez will be able to extricate himself from the bribery scandal with a clean slate. Batangas province had several sons who served in the Cabinet of past administrations and not one of them was ever suspected or accused of any wrong doing while in office.

If I am not mistaken, Galicano Apacible was agriculture secretary under Governor General Francis B. Harrison. Jose P. Laurel Sr., was interior secretary in the Cabinet of Governor General Leonard Wood. Anotnio de las Alas was finance secretary in Quezon Cabinet. Roman Ozaeta was justice secretary under President Roxas. Felixberto Serrano, Manuel Collantes and Salvador Laurel served as foreign secretary in the time of Presidents Garcia, Marcos and Aquino, respectively. Arturo Tanco, whose mother was from Lipa City, was agriculture secretary in the Marcos Cabinet. And I think Ben Medrano also held a position of Cabinet rank in the Quirino or Macapagal administration.

All the above gentlemen served well and acquitted themselves like true public servants. We fervently wish that Hernando Perez would be like them and eventually prove his innocence of the accusations against him.

—JESUS NATANAUAN,
Talisay, Batanags

Why FPJ should be true to himself

THE UNDISPUTED king of local movie, Fernando Poe, Jr. or simply FPJ, has not given a categorical assent to the request to draft him for the 2003 presidential race. Many are sure that in the end he will run for the wrong reason. To begin with, the singular place of honor and affection that FPJ has earned in the public eye is something most if not all his peers must envy. Such public adulation is well deserved not just because of the nononsense heroes he portrayed or his long-standing status as box office king but also because of the myth he created. Unlike his best buddy, former president Joseph Estrada, whose totally self-seeking lifestyle is an open book, FPJ admitted that his shortcomings and vices are his best kept secrets only because he never wants to give the wrong example for the youth. Being a good peer model is something Erap did not worry much about when his gambling and all-night drinking leaked out to the press. He even acquired more mistresses who received extravagant gifts he could not have paid for from his presidential salary.

Being a more sensible sort, FPJ knows only too well that if he tries to learn the complexity of the responsibilities of the presidency only after election, this will have very disastrous implications for the fate of our nation and on him personally. Those calling themselves his closest friends yet pressuring him to run care less if he bungles the job like his best friend did. Their obvious sole concern is what they think they can get from government positions or juicy contracts. Against these so-called friends, there is wisdom in FPJ's mother's consistent refusal to let him run for any public office.

"Humanity is nobility." A person must know his place in the scheme of things according to God's plan, considering the gifts we have or have not received from him. As Erap proved while he was president, the position requires certain basic leadership qualifications for one to be able to make wise decisions. As a neophyte in dirty politics where the most manipulative and corrupt now constitute the majority, with his simplicity of character that has endeared him to his fans, FPJ will only be like sheep being led blindly to slaughter. To remain true to his character, FPJ must realize that loyalty to his best friend, whose fate is now best left for the court to decide, is not a justifiable reason for him to run for president in 2004. In better times, I will take my chances on FPJ. But right now, there is so much more at stake for us, than at any time in our history.

—MATY JOAN A. ANGELES,
Marikina City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

UN slaps tougher sanctions on Iraq

BAGHDAD/UNITED NATIONS—Iraq, its economy in tatters, faced tougher sanctions on Tuesday after the United Nations named goods such as drugs, trucks and boats that cannot be imported without prior approval.

US and British warplanes attacked Iraqi air defenses after the Iraqis flew military aircraft into the southern "no-fly" zone, the US military said.

The 15-nation UN Security Council voted 13-0 to adopt the resolution expanding the list of civilian goods under sanctions.

Russia and Syria abstained.

The United States and Britain cautioned Iraq against seeing this as a sign of divisions over its obligation—under former council resolutions—to give up weapons of mass destruction or face "serious consequences."

Iraq said the resolution would aggravate the suffering of its people, who have been under UN economic sanctions since Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait in 1990.

"We confirm that the Security Council should lift the sanctions and that Iraq has met all its obligations with regard to Security Council resolutions," Iraqi envoy Mohammed S. Ali told reporters.

Additions to the UN sanctions list range from drugs to protect Iraqi soldiers from poison gas and anthrax to boats like those used in a deadly attack on a US warship two years ago.

At its headquarters in Florida, the US Central Command said in a statement that US and British aircraft used precision-guided weapons to target Iraqi air defense communications facilities and an air defense mobile radar in strikes on Monday.

It marked the second straight day and the fourth in five days that the Western aircraft have attacked Iraqi targets in the southern no-fly zone.

A top adviser to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said the United States was trying to tempt scientists to leave Iraq and entice them to giving false information with financial offers.

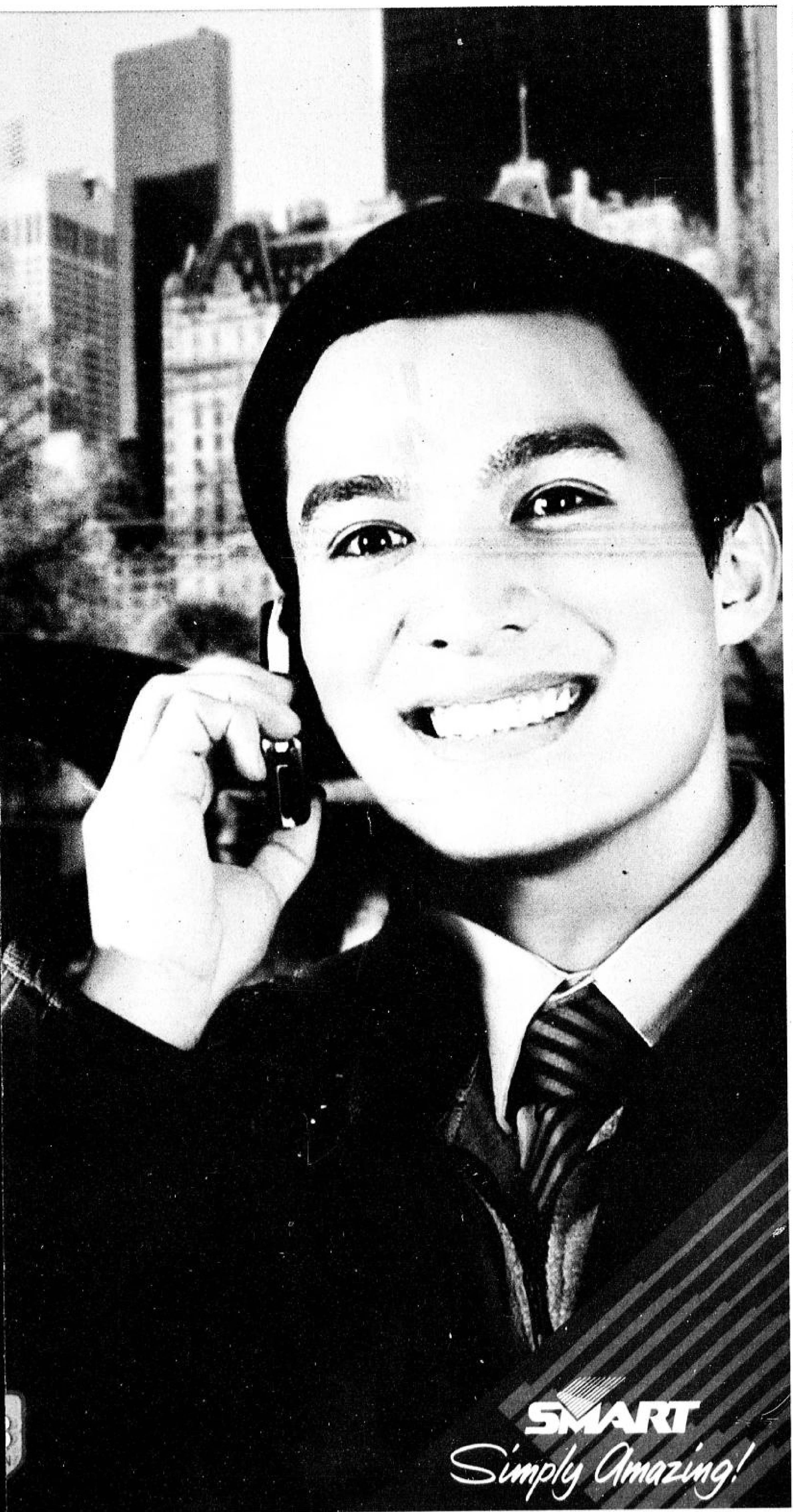
Iraq provided names of more than 500 scientists on Saturday, saying they were linked to its nuclear, biological, chemical and ballistic weapons programs.

UN inspectors began interviewing scientists over Iraq's alleged weapons programs last week but the United States wants some of the interviews to take place outside Iraq.

"This is an American plan with a clear aim. If it succeeds in tempting some of those (scientists) through promises or maybe also through threats it might get information, also false information," Amir al-Saadi, Saddam's scientific adviser, said.

The United States has declared Baghdad in material breach of a UN Security Council resolution passed in November which gave Iraq one last chance to disarm or face possible war.

Washington said an Iraqi declaration over its weapons of mass destruction fell short of revealing arms programs. Iraq denies it has any such programs. *Reuters*



Citizen Clone: Officials clueless on nationality to apply on cloned babies

WASHINGTON—The State Department said Monday it would be at a complete loss if the American mother of a purportedly cloned child applied for a US passport or sought citizenship for her daughter.

Deputy spokesperson Philip Reeker said such an application would break new ground and require substantial consultation with lawyers before it could be reviewed.

"In the hypothetical situation of a cloned baby, this would be a new situation and therefore at this time we would be unable to determine how US laws regarding nationality would apply to this child," Reeker told reporters.

"It is something that lawyers would have to look at in the event that the hypothetical situation was to actually be a situation that would have to be dealt with," he said.

Reeker said he was not aware that the matter was currently under discussion by the State Department, which issues US passports and serves as a conduit for nationality questions about children of US citizens born abroad.

His comments came in response to questions raised by the claim of a cult that says a cloned girl, born abroad to a 31-year-old American woman last week, would be heading "home" on Monday.

At a news conference on Friday, Brigitte Boisselier, president of the group's cloning company, Clonaid, claimed, without providing proof, that a baby girl cloned from her mother had been born on Thursday by Cesarian section at a hospital outside the United States.

. She said that baby, named Eve, would return home in three days.

That led to speculation that the child would be coming to the United States and on Monday US television commentators questioned the propriety of bringing the several-days old baby back to the United States aboard an airplane even if the child could get immigration papers.

But Boisselier has declined to say where "home" is and denied having ever said the child was be traveling to the United States.

"I don't know who talked about a plane, and she is not necessarily returning to the United States," she told AFP. "I only said that she would go home."

The claim has sparked a massive controversy and brought the cloning issue to the forefront of an international debate over the legality and morality of the procedure.

In the United States, the White House has said the claim "underscores the need for the new Congress to act on bipartisan legislation to ban all human cloning."

The case may also open an entirely new area of immigration law, Reeker suggested.

Under current US legislation, children are not allowed to travel on the passport of their parent or parents and must have their own documents to enter the United States if born abroad.

However, children born to US citizens abroad are not necessarily automatically entitled to US citizenship themselves. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

US condemns Yemen shooting

SANAA/CRAWFORD, Texas—The United States has vowed to hunt down "any and all" of those responsible for gunning down three American Christian missionaries in Yemen.

Yemeni police arrested a 30-year-old man. They said he was an Islamist militant and had told them he attacked the Baptist mission hospital in southern Yemen on Monday to get closer to God.

Witnesses said Abed Abdel Razzak Kamel entered a provincial clinic at Jibla posing as a patient. He is accused of shooting dead a doctor and two of her colleagues. An American pharmacist was wounded.

US officials said it was too early to jump to conclusions about whether the man acted alone or was linked with groups such as al-Qaida, whose leader, Osama bin Laden, has his family origins in Yemen. ***Reuters***

Venezuela police arrest general

CARACAS, Venezuela—Venezuelan police on Monday detained a dissident general, goading the opposition who have blocked massive oil exports with their strike but failed to force President Hugo Chavez to resign.

The leftist leader has thumbed his nose at a 29-day-old strike that has closed down shipments from the world's fifth-largest oil exporter and at huge marches, one of which brought a million demonstrators onto the streets of Caracas.

Police did not say why they had taken away National Guard Gen. Carlos Alfonso Martinez, a prominent member of a group of dissident armed forces officers who have been camping out in a Caracas square since October calling for Chavez to step down.

But the government accuses Martinez and other officers of involvement in an April coup which briefly toppled the leftist president before he was restored to power by loyalist troops.

A lawyer speaking for Martinez said the general had not been charged and that his detention was illegal. ***Reuters***

Omens not good, says shaman

LIMA, Peru—A Peruvian shaman seeking to divine the future staged an elaborate ritual on Monday with potions, skulls and incantations, and came up with what many people have gathered from watching television—war with Iraq is almost certain in 2003.

Juan Osco, dubbed the "Shaman of the Andes," led six other poncho-clad soothsayers in a New Year's ritual of invoking the gods, spitting and spraying garishly colored potions and strewing flower petals to the beats of drums and rattles on a hill overlooking Lima decked with skulls, shells and beads.

The omens are not good. "War (in Iraq) is almost inevitable, that's what the United States wants," said the black-bearded Osco.

"Saddam Hussein is strong . . . He won't just want to give up. There won't be a winner. A lot of innocent lives will be lost." He added "new types of chemical weapons" would be used. ***Reuters***

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Negotiator appeals for son's release

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The man behind the safe release of five-year-old kidnap victim Stewart Aparejo has asked government authorities here to return the favor he had done.

Moammar Biston, father-in-law of Moro Islamic Liberation Front chair Hashim Salamat and main negotiator for the release of Aparejo, said he has witnesses who could prove police intelligence operatives here were the ones who picked up his son, Omar.

"I have the feeling my son is still alive. I hope, he's alive," he said.

Biston volunteered to help in the release of Aparejo after his son mysteriously disappeared.

He believed that the disappearance of his son was related to the Aparejo kidnapping.

Aparejo was kidnapped Aug. 8. More than a month after, his 27-year-old son also went missing.

Biston said it came out in his investigation that intelligence operatives of the city police were the ones who took his son in Barangay Apopong on Sept. 19.

Since then, Biston's family has never seen Omar.

The van used by the police was identified and Biston said Chief Insp. Necitas Cardos, intelligence chief of the city police, admitted to him he owned the vehicle.

But Biston said Cardos denied the involvement of his men in the abduction of Omar.

On Dec. 11, Biston met with Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr., Cardos and two of the close relatives of Aparejo.

He was given authority by the mayor to serve as chief negotiator for the release of the boy.

It was also during that meeting when Cardos urged him to start talking with the kidnappers, adding that if the boy is released unharmed "we might also find your son."

On Dec. 12, Biston met with MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu in Cotabato City and asked for MILF's help in locating the kidnapped boy.

The following day, Dec. 13, through the help of the MILF, Biston saw the boy in the hands of his captors. He returned to the kidnappers' lair on Dec. 14 to take photographs of the boy to prove that he is still alive.

At first, Biston said, one of the Pentagon gang leaders Salik Maruhom demanded P600,000 in ransom—P300,000 for Aparejo and another P300,000 for Ariel Paraiso, a friend of the kidnap victim.

Paraiso, a neighbor and close friend of Stewart, was reportedly taken at gunpoint about a month after the kidnapping.

Biston said Paraiso is still being held by the kidnappers led by Commander Salik.

Biston said he had learned that Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang has split itself into five groups. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 soldiers slain in NPA attack in N. Samar

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Two soldiers were killed while three others were wounded on Monday when communist rebels fired on them after the vehicle they were riding hit a land mine on a road leading to Catarman, the capital town of Northern Samar.

The fatalities were identified as Pfc. Roberto Mannil and Pfc. Regenaldo Sardena, both belonging to the Army's 63rd Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Cervantes, Catarman.

Their bodies were brought to the Northern Samar provincial hospital for autopsy.

Lt. Rean Ante, Cpl. Rodito Tibes and Pfc. Leonardo Mein, also of the 63rd Infantry Battalion, were brought to the same hospital for treatment of their wounds.

Supt. Alberto Mendador, chief of the Northern Samar Police Provincial Office, yesterday said a report reaching his office showed that the victims left their camp to buy food and other personal items in Catarman when the attack took place at about 9:30 a.m.

Land mine

The Kennedy-type military service vehicle that the five soldiers were riding hit a land mine near a bridge in Sitio Hebabaugan, Barangay Washington, also of Catarman, which is some 10 kilometers away from the town proper.

Then a volley of gunfire followed, coming from some 70 New People's Army guerrillas who were waiting along the roadside.

The two soldiers were killed on the spot. The three others, who were wounded, were able to jump out of the vehicle and run for cover. Aware that they were outnumbered, the wounded soldiers escaped.

Mendador said the military vehicle was burned by the rebels who also took the two M-16 Armalite rifles of the dead soldiers before they fled to a forested area.

The rebels who staged the ambush belong to the NPA's Sergio Lobina Command that operates in Northern Samar, he added.

Detonation

Policemen found from the scene a 50-meter long detonating cord and a damaged paint can believed to have been used by the rebels as an improvised land mine.

Also recovered from the ambush site were several spent shells of M-16 and M-14 rifles.

The attack occurred four days after the Communist Party of the Philippines marked its 34th founding anniversary on Dec. 26. The NPA is the armed wing of the CPP.

GETTING ready for a lot of noise and explosion, a firecracker dealer arranges his ware expecting sales to pick up just as the New Year draws near. JOAN BONDOC

Make light and noise, not explosion, firecracker makers told

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Instead of firecrackers, develop products that emit a lot of light and noise to lessen injuries during the New Year revelry.

This was the advice given Sunday by Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief, to the country's firecracker manufacturers.

Ebdane said the firecracker industry, which has been confronting gradually low sales in the last five years, is considering this option.

"We have to consider all factors, not only about safety or security but also the economic dimension. Perhaps, instead of concentrating on explosive materials, why don't we divert to other products, one that emits loud sound but not the explosion," he said.

"Instead of dangerous exploding products, we should concentrate on the production of products emitting sound and color," Ebdane, who was here with President Macapagal-Arroyo to inaugurate the Cordillera's first police housing project, said.

"In China, if anyone notices, they produce rockets which they explode up in the air. We still throw small firecrackers at everyone's feet here in small neighborhoods."

Ebdane said the worldwide concern over terrorism had made chemical regulation a mandatory policy for the government.

But he said manufacturers in the Philippines still use dangerous combinations of chemicals to make "homemade" explosives for the seasonal firecracker business.

He said the police have asked manufacturers to ensure quality control in their products. *Vincent Cabreza and Robert Abano, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

NPA admits raid on Davao Oriental capitol

MATI, Davao Oriental—The New People's Army's (NPA) Merardo Arce Command yesterday admitted it was behind the raid on the Mati Capitol Mansion here on Sunday.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the NPA's Southern Mindanao regional operations command, said the raid and the disarming of the Civil Security Unit (CSU) members were successfully carried out by the Willy Zapanta Command (Wizac).

"In a sterling display of good combat intelligence, bravery, military precision and mass support, the NPA guerrillas entered the compound," Sanchez said in a press statement.

The rebels confiscated three M-16 Armalite rifles, two M-14 rifles, a Carbine, a Springfield rifle and two shotguns.

Senior Supt. Catalino Cuy, provincial police chief, said sketches based on witnesses' accounts led to the identity of one of the raiders, Dante Villasquina, a rebel returnee and a former CSU member.

Cuy said Villasquina was one of the seven armed men who entered the Governor's Mansion while 12 others served as lookout.

No one was hurt during the raid but it revealed the vulnerability of the capitol to rebel attacks.

The NPA has been stepping up its offensives following the reluctance of the government in declaring a ceasefire during the holidays.

The rebels had been responsible for many attacks on government targets.

Some targets were businesses and companies that refused to pay the rebels revolutionary taxes.

In various parts of Mindanao, rebels had torched buses of companies that refused to heed the guerrillas' demand for taxes. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Ayan C. Mellejor and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Wanted: Typewriters for remote Abra towns' writers, journalists

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BANGUED, Abra—If you have a typewriter gathering dust somewhere in your house, play Santa and donate it to a high school in the interior towns of Abra.

Edgardo Ferras, an English teacher of Tineg National High School, said his student writers have to wait for weekends to type their stories because they have to borrow the only typewriter of the town at the municipal hall.

Other high school papers in the interior towns of Abra also have the same dilemma.

During a recent journalism workshop here organized by the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD), the high school newspaper advisers also said many of the towns do not even have electricity.

Red Batario, executive director of CCJD, said the next best journalists or writers could come from these towns and it would be tragic if they would not have a chance to hone their talents.

The experience of Ferras' wards showed the sacrifice these young writers would have to go through just to attend the Division Schools Press Conference last October in Pilar town.

The seven staffers of "Paawang" hiked for two days just to attend the conference.

"The hike was not easy," Ferras recounted. "The trail going up and down the rugged hills and mountain was slippery because of the early morning shower. The afternoon hike was under heavy downpour," he said.

The seven—Raquel Tingday, Leonel Libuen, Loide Quezada, Maria Richelle Ferras, Leeziel Libuen, Marydel Libuen and Geraldine Marcos—were supposed to stop at a rest house late afternoon in Tapayen, Tineg, but found out that the house was razed by suspected New People's Army rebels.

The house was reportedly used by the late Tineg Mayor Clarence Benwaren as his own private camp.

The group decided to spend the night in Barangay Alimusgan in San Juan town, about 10 km from Tapayen.

"Darkness caught up with the group with still four kilometers to walk to Alimusgan," Ferras said. "Flashlights on, they walked through slippery paths, and in some parts, knee-deep muddy road."

"They were not only Jacks and Jills who went up the hills, they were my budding writers in search of knowledge and experience," Ferras said.

Those who want to donate typewriters, coupon bonds and books may contact Fr. Tony of Abra Today at the Diocesan Center in Bangued or call him at his cell phone: 09197324970.

Stigma of abortion opens women to many abuses

BAGUIO CITY—A woman, who was seven months pregnant, had a miscarriage owing to complications from diabetes.

As she was being wheeled into the hospital while bleeding, a female doctor told her, "I don't want to treat this kind of cases. They tried to abort their babies but they can't handle it."

Those harsh words were the last she heard before lapsing into coma.

She has since recovered but the stinging words from the doctor have been haunting her.

An administrator of another hospital was reported telling her ward not to give anesthesia to patients who they suspected to have had induced abortions.

A reproductive rights worker has reminded health workers that they are criminally and ethically liable if they do not help patients who seek treatment for induced abortion.

"They must attend to these patients in a humane and appropriate way. In 2000, the Department of Health issued Administrative Order 45 not only to prevent but also to manage abortions and resulting complications," said Dr. Florence Tadiar, executive director of Reproductive Rights Resource Group.

"Abortion is illegal but we must realize that women go through it as a last resort. Maybe they were raped or battered. There are many reasons why women go through abortion. We cannot just close our eyes," said Tadiar, who is also the administrator of Lorma Hospital in San Fernando City in La Union.

"All patients have rights. Under the Patient Rights Bill, there should be fair treatment and access to scientific process to all," she said.

Tadiar said the AO 45, otherwise known as Prevention and Management of Abortion and its Complications (PMAC), seeks to strengthen the capability of the country's health system in PMAC but also to improve the accessibility of quality post-abortion care services to women of reproductive age.

The DOH said abortion and its complications are the third leading cause of hospital discharge and 25 abortions for every 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 happen each year.

In 1997, there were more than 80,000 women who were hospitalized for treatment of induced abortions.

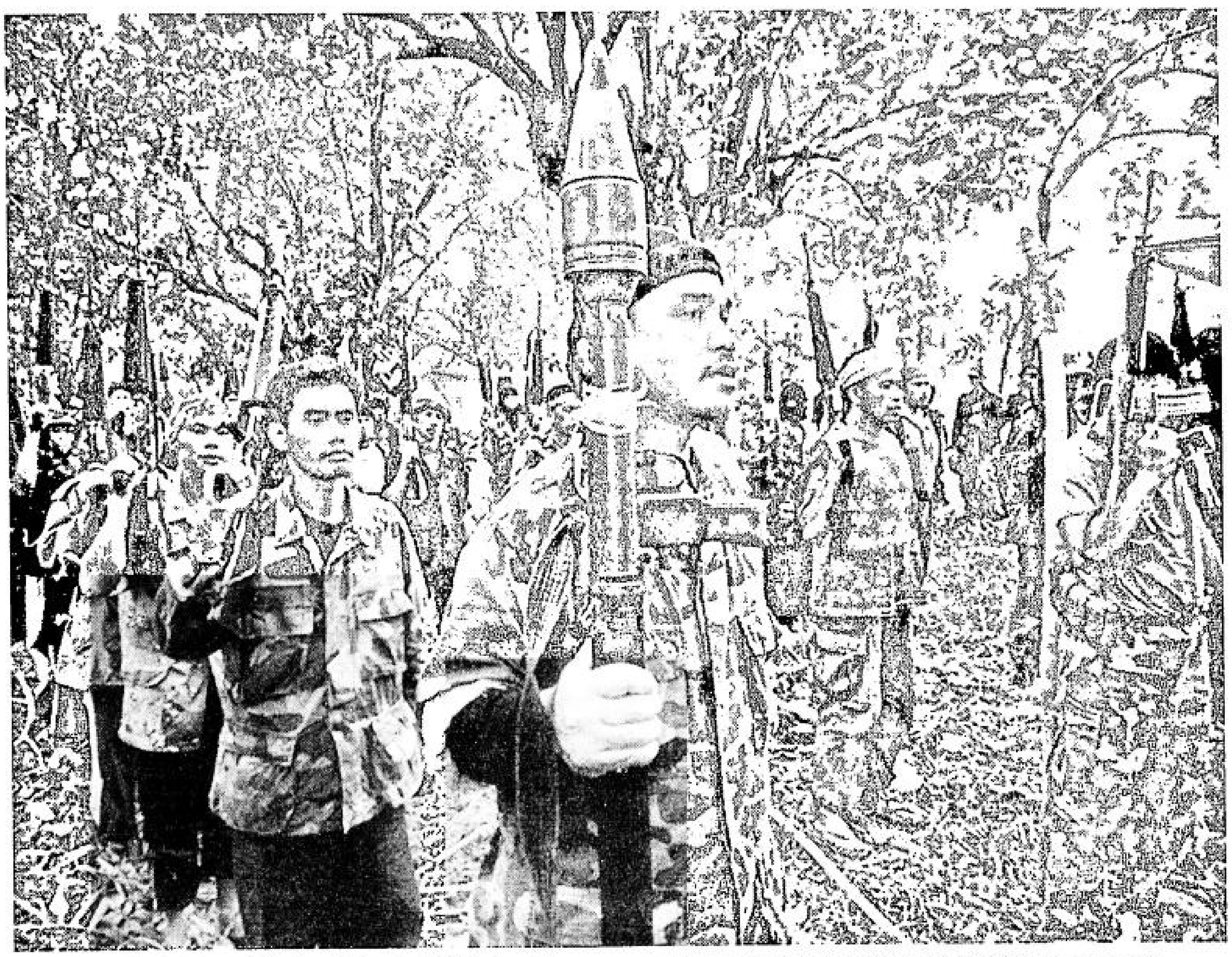
Maltreatment by health workers on these patients is indeed prevalent, Tadiar said. "They are cruel," she added.

The Ebgan, a women's anti-violence group in Cordillera, said 500 cases of abortions were admitted in four hospitals in Baguio and 123 at the Benguet General Hospital from January to September this year.

Tadiar said by 2004, 50 DOH-retained hospitals should already be providing quality PMAC services. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

RP-US COOPERATION

Gloria claims success against terrorism



MORO guerrillas in Camp Abubakar in October 2000 before the government declared total war against the MILF and raided the camp.

FILE/GENE BOYD LUMAWAG

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo said the cooperation between the Philippines and the United States in the fight against terrorism has resulted in "very important victories" against terrorists.

Ms Macapagal and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone had a 20-minute talk during the annual US Ambassador's holiday reception at Camp John Hay here on Friday afternoon and talked mostly about the two countries' fight against terrorism.

"We talked mostly about security cooperation between the Philippines and the US because it is one of the things that drive our relationship during this very difficult period of the world characterized by terrorism," Ms Macapagal told reporters during a dinner that she hosted at the presidential Mansion here on Friday.

The President did not specify these "very important victories" but was apparently referring to the government's campaign against the bandit group Abu Sayyaf operating in some parts of Mindanao.

This year, American troops conducted large-scale training exercises with their Filipino counterparts to improve the Philippine government's capability in fighting terrorist groups. Also this year, a number of Abu Sayyaf leaders and members were either killed or arrested due to intensified military operations.

"We recalled that even before Sept. 11, 2001 (when the World Trade Center in New York was bombed), the Philippines was already fighting terrorists . . . the Abu Sayyaf," Ms Macapagal said.

She said she and Ricciardone have agreed that the fight on terrorism should also focus on the eradication of poverty.

"When you fight terrorism, you have to fight poverty as well because terrorism flourishes when you have people who are poor," she said.

"In fact, the cooperation between our two countries has led us to very important victories against the terrorists. That's why we're very much on the offensive and we're very much on the defensive. We should continue this security cooperation," she said.

The President said they also talked about the manner by which both countries could extend help to each another in the campaign against terrorism.

"But I don't really think we can discuss very detailed security matters," she told reporters.

Ms Macapagal said she and Ricciardone did not talk about the impending US-Iraq war and the extradition of Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez during the reception held at the US Ambassador's Residence at Camp John Hay. *Robert Abaño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Terror threats spare Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CTY—Tourists continue to flock to the world-famous island of Boracay, bucking threats of terror attacks and travel advisories that discouraged travel to the Philippines and other Asian countries.

Tourist arrivals as of November this year reached 276,187, according to data from the Department of Tourism-Western Visayas (DOT-6).

The figure is 13.28 percent more than the 243,819 visitors recorded over the same period last year.

Filipino visitors accounted for bulk of the tourists, reaching 205,768 compared to the 69,119 foreign visitors.

Tourists from East Asia comprised more than two-thirds of foreign visitors at 48,920 followed by Europeans with 11,063 and North Americans with 5,519.

Among the countries, Koreans topped the number of visitors, reaching 43,278 followed by a distant 4,415 from the United States and 3,716 from Japan.

The tourists poured in more than P5 billion in 11 months in the economy, higher than the P4.86 billion recorded for the entire 2001.

Gross income from Boracay visitors average nearly P3.5 billion yearly for the past six years.

Visitors in Boracay, known for its pristine-white beaches and crystal clear waters, have been on the upswing since 1996.

While it suffered a slight decline in 1997 and 1998 after the Asian financial crisis, the number of visitors bounced back in 1999 until now.

Gross income from Boracay visitors average nearly P3.5 billion yearly in the past six years but last year, tourists poured in P4.86 billion in the economy.

Dionisio Salme, president of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI), admitted there was a slight decrease of tourists from Europe after the bombing in Bali Indonesia, which killed nearly 300 mostly foreign tourists.

But these had been offset by the significant increase of Korean and Filipino tourists.

"We are hopeful that the tourist arrivals will increase next year as a result of efforts to ensure the safety of visitors on the island," Salme told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

8, mostly kids, die of measles in remote tribal community

BUTUAN CITY—Eight people, mostly children, were killed and 37 others were hospitalized due to a measles attack last week in Mamanwa tribal communities in Santiago town, Agusan del Norte.

Rudy Arap, National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) field officer in Santiago town, said the number of those killed by the virus is expected to rise as Mamanwa women and elders refused treatment and vaccination for their children.

Children, women and elders were rushed to the hospital but four out of the 37 returned home resisting treatment because of their beliefs.

"They want to resort to their own tribal way of treatment," Arap told the INQUIRER.

He said the airborne virus was only discovered on Dec. 23 and already affected at least five remote barangays in the area.

Annabelle Sabornido, information officer of the Department of Health in the Caraga region, said clinical signs and symptoms revealed that the virus affected members of the tribal communities.

Sabornido, however, said the number of recorded cases is not alarming and does not require a declaration of an epidemic.

"There is no outbreak, just an increase in the number of cases," she said.

Most of the victims of the measles attack have no history of measles vaccination, according to her.

Sabornido said those communities affected are susceptible to the virus due to poor sanitation and malnutrition among the children and some elderly members of the tribal groups.

The DoH Caraga region unit dispatched a team from the Regional Epidemiological Surveillance Unit (RESU) to help the local government unit control and prevent the spread of the disease.

Sabornido said they are facing difficulties in eradicating the disease citing stiff tribal resistance and the inaccessibility of the barangays where the measles attack took place.

"We will convince them through health education on (ways to implement) measles prevention," she said. *Franklin M. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Cabinet member joins call for national unity

A MEMBER of President Macapagal Arroyo's Cabinet yesterday joined the call for unity among all sectors following the President's announcement Monday that she was not standing for election as president in 2004.

In a statement, Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza said the President's decision was a signal for everyone to help build a strong republic that could withstand the challenges of politics and economic ups and downs.

In his statement, Braganza also urged the people "to pool resources together and help one another in improving the living condition of our less fortunate brothers and sisters."

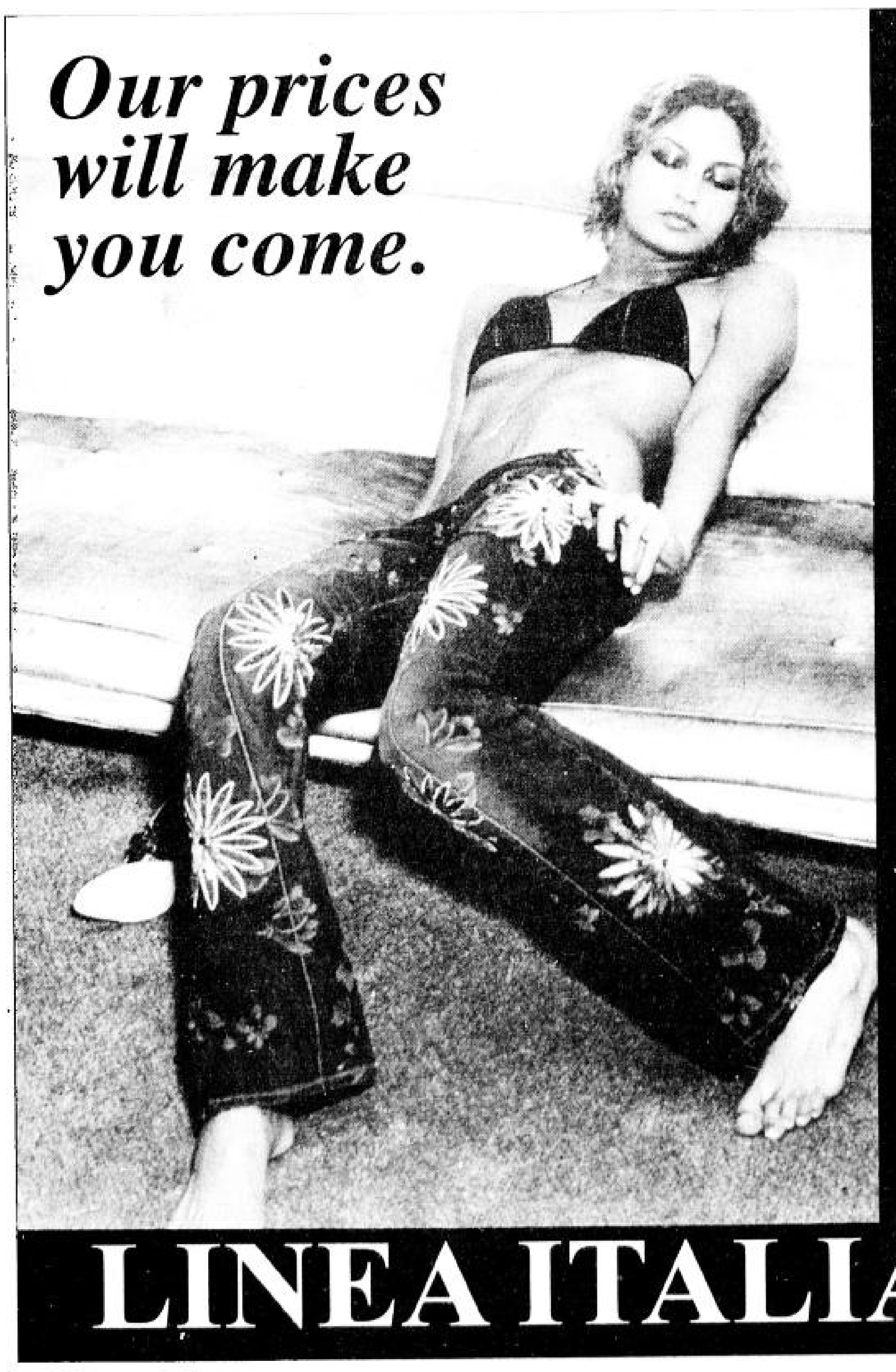
"Our President has finally defined her presidency. You can sum it up in four words: Bayan Muna Bago Pulitika," Braganza's statement said.

"With her latest announcement, she has set the standards of governance in the country to the highest level. She has set an example for us, public servants, to follow. And she made it very clear. We must set aside politics and serve the people first. Elections, therefore, should be farthest from our minds."

"I hope that our colleagues in the opposition would share this view of the President. Undeniably, this administration inherited an enormous task left unfinished by previous administrations. But this is not the time to blame who was responsible for the sorry state of the nation. Now is the time to build, not destroy.

"I also believe that the President's call for national unity is not limited to those serving in government. More importantly, now is the time for all Filipinos—regardless of political, ideological or religious belief—to unite and help the government build a strong Republic. We should pool our resources together and help one another in improving the living condition of our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

"The President has repeatedly stated her vision: a strong nation where the people have jobs, shelter and other basic necessities in life. *Sa isang salita, isang bansa na ang mamamayan ay may disenteng pamumuhay*. With politics all behind us now, I believe we can all achieve this vision in the shortest time possible."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Philippines' 'Ozymandias' still haunts

By Frank Cimatu and Joya Santos-Doctor
Tuba, Benguet

IT WAS described by the New York Times as the "Philippine Ozymandias," and whoever will read Percy Shelley's sonnet entitled "Ozymandias" will know that NYT's description was prophetic.

"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" The sonnet ends: "Nothing beside remains. Round the decay/ Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare/ The lone and level sands stretch far away."

The Philippine Ozymandias is indeed a wreck now.

One earth-shattering blast at about 1:45 a.m. on Dec. 29 damaged the 10-meter concrete countenance of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos in Barangay Taloy Sur in Tuba, Benguet.

Debris was found along the Marcos Highway 300 meters away. The bust's eyes, nose and right ear were blown off. The left cheek and the back of the head were shattered.

But like the typical Ilocano macho, Marcos' trademark Barong Tagalog was hardly ruffled.

Upon hearing the explosion, brothers Cirilo and Zarate Juan, the self-appointed caretakers of the bust who lived just below it, cursed their nephew Jose. They thought Jose, who is a small-scale miner, was blasting some big boulders in the mountain again at such an unholy hour.

Danny Daniel, who tends a store along the highway, recalled being shaken from his dreams. He immediately reported the incident to the police.

Along with PO2 Razildo Acosta and PO2 John Leo Kislay, Daniel crept through the darkness, wary that they could detonate some more explosives.

They pointed their flashlights at the bust and were the first to see the colossal wreck.

The Marcos bust was built at around 1978 by the Philippine Tourism Agency. It was supposed to be the centerpiece of the 300-hectare Marcos Park that would include a nine-hole golf course, sports club, hotel and convention center.

But in doing so, the government had to force the Ibalois living in Taloy Sur to sell their lands at an outrageously low price.

The construction of the bust was kept secret. Mt. Shontoug was chosen as the site so the bust can be seen by Baguio-bound motorists even from a distance of 3 km.

Zarate Juan, 65, recalled that no Taloy Sur resident was asked to work in the bust; only "lowlanders" were allowed. A scaffolding covered with plywood was set in front so the construction could not be seen by other people.

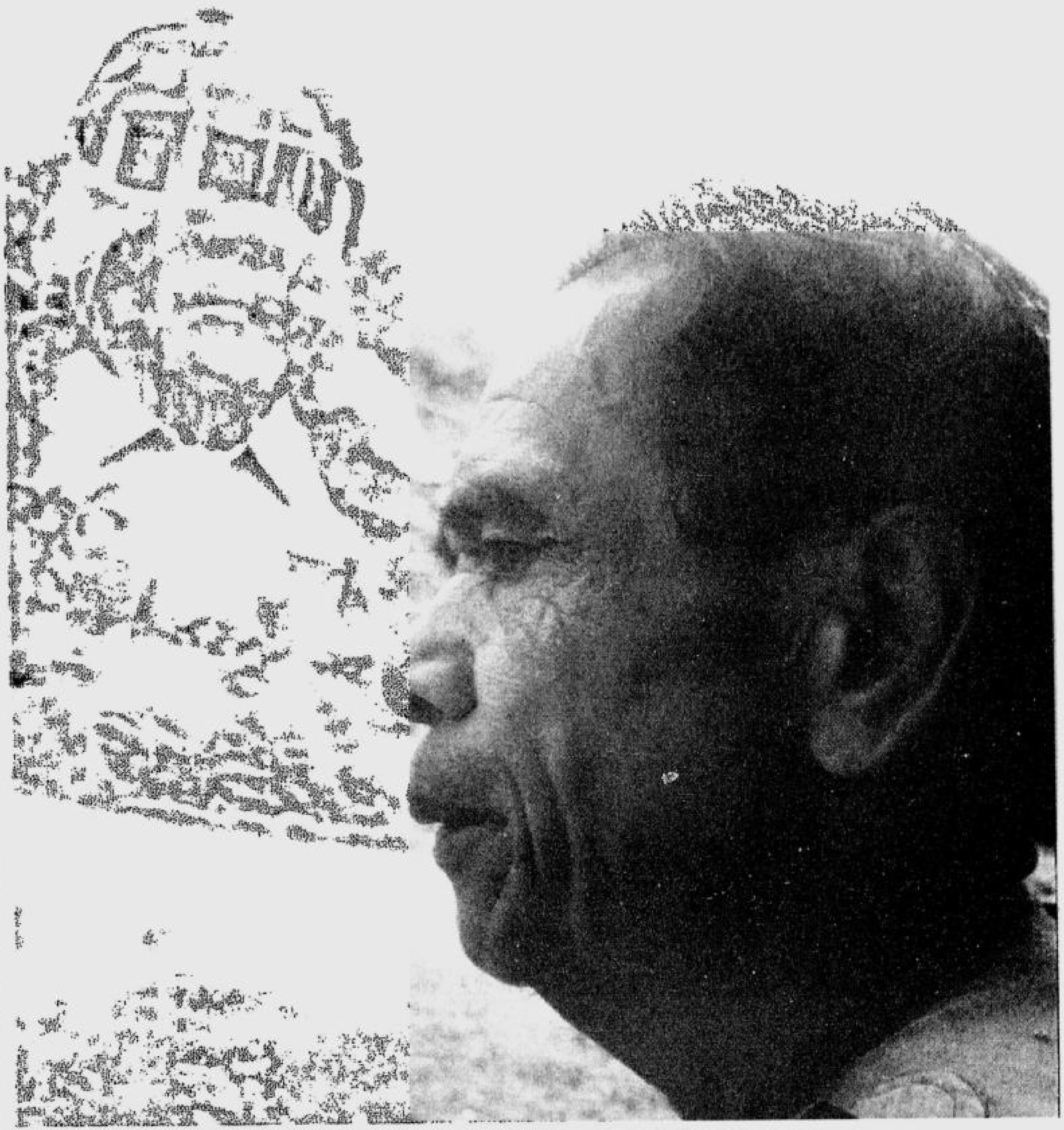
The famous father-son team Anselmo Dayag Sr. and Anselmo Jr. were chosen to design the bust. But the elder Dayag died in a mysterious accident, recalled Rose Labutan, the president of the Taloy Folk Organization that fought the PTA for the return of the Ibaloi lands.

Later, she said, the younger Dayag also died in a mysterious ailment. A Manila engineer who took over the project also died of mysterious circumstances. All deaths occurred even before the bust was completed sometime in 1980.

Later, a typhoon blew off the plywood covering the construction site and the Marcos bust was exposed. Human rights lawyer Pablito Sanidad was among the first people who saw it while he was driving down Marcos Highway.

He asked for the photographs of Baguio-based photographers Bernie Okubo and Sly Quintos of the bust and had them published in Metro Manila's mosquito papers then.

During the years that followed the ouster of Marcos, the Marcos Park became the favorite "picnic ground" for Marcos oppositionists.



AN "ABOMINATION" turned tourist attraction—the busted bust of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. EV ESPIRITU

Then opposition candidates Corazon Aquino and Salvador Laurel, who were running against Marcos and Arturo Tolentino Jr. in the 1986 snap elections, posed in front of the bust with their Laban sign. Other activists made it a point to pee on the bust's head.

In 1989, leftists tried to blow up the bust but ended up just making a hole in the right ear.

Investigators are now saying that the explosives used in blasting the bust on Dec. 29 were placed in the holes made by treasure hunters in the 1990s.

Residents, however, don't believe that the blast was made by treasure hunters or even by the New People's Army's Chadli Molintas Command, who admitted to the deed.

Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas, a brother of the NPA martyr Chadli, also believed that this was not an NPA handiwork.

"There is no political significance for the movement to do such thing. I think it is a local issue like land claims. But the claims are now being processed so I don't also believe that the local residents would do such thing," Molintas said.

"I don't believe that this is the handiwork of anyone of us," claimant Samuel Ino Kinomis said. "If it was one of my tribes people, we could have done this long ago when the hatred against him (pointing to the wrecked image) was still burning," Kinomis said.

Labutan let out a big laugh when she was told that she was one of the suspects being eyed in the blasting.

"What will I gain in doing that? Life has been so peaceful since the PTA surrendered its property to the locals here, to the point that we do not even care enough now if the bust is there or not," Labutan said.

Labutan echoed the observations of Kinomis and Daniel here. They said that no resident here has enough money to destroy the bust.

"I can't even afford to blast the small boulders in my property so I can fix the road going to my home. What more a big head like Marcos'," Labutan said.

But as the Ozymandias demonstrated, monuments to power will come and go. It is only a matter of time that Marcos' head, like the proverbial volcano his enemies loved to use as metaphor for the revolution, will explode by itself.

With spirits around, no one dare pollute rivers in Apayao

By Frank Cimatu
Baguio City

THE RIVERS of Apayao are haunted by spirits. The Isnegs, the indigenous people of Apayao, believe that when a member of a clan dies, the spirit inhabits a part of the river or lake.

This may account for the eerie feeling when one navigates the six major rivers of Apayao. But for the sake of protecting the environment, a haunted river is a good thing.

The Ziwanan River of Calanasan town was again judged by the Department of Interior and Local Government as the cleanest and greenest in the Cordillera. For the past years that the DILG had given this award, the rivers of Apayao always came out on top. Nagan River in Pudtol town was judged the cleanest and greenest from 1998 to 2000.

Maybe it has to do with Apayao hosting most of Northern Luzon's tropical forest. Apayao's population is only a little more than seven percent of the Cordillera's 1.4 million. But the Isnegs insist that their practice of *lapat* has kept them from destroying their rivers.

Lapat, which means "taking over" in Ilocano, is part of the Isneg's death rituals. When a clan member dies, his spirit is said to dwell in a river, brook, lake, forest or hunting grounds.

A clan or family member will determine through divination what part of the river or lake or forest is taken over by the dead.

When the area is set for *lapat*, anyone is prohibited from entering, despoiling or even gathering fruits or wild plants or from hunting and fishing in that area.

Anyone caught violating the *lapat* will be penalized depending on age, sex or social status. Restitution may be in the form of cash or property like antique beads, cloth and jewelry depending on the terms and conditions set before the *lapat* takes effect. The violator is also expected to shoulder the *sayyam* or the ritual to remove the warning signs set by the family.

No one is exempted from the *lapat*.

If a trespasser is not caught in the *lapat* area, the Isnegs believe that that the anitos (spirits) will inflict sickness or death on the violator.

Supreme Being

The Isnegs do not believe in a Supreme Being, but in a number of spirits, both good and evil. One important spirit is the *anglabbang*, the spirit of the headhunters.

The *lapat* is set from one to two years, after which the spirit leaves and the river will cease to be haunted.

. Because of the *lapat*, the rivers of Apayao escaped the fate of overexploitation and pollution that befell other rivers in the Cordillera and nearby Cagayan Valley.

A DILG evaluator said the Ziwanan River is so clean that one can see clearly more than a foot from the river surface.

More than a fourth of the 18,165 families in Apayao still rely on water fetched from rivers, lakes and springs for their drinking and cooking needs, according to the National Statistics Office.

Bottled water is non-existent in Apayao, compared to Baguio City where many families get their water for drinking and cooking from water refilling and delivery firms.

Half of Apayao's population are Ilocanos while Isnegs comprise almost a third. The rest are Malauegs and Itawis and Kalinga and Benguet migrants.

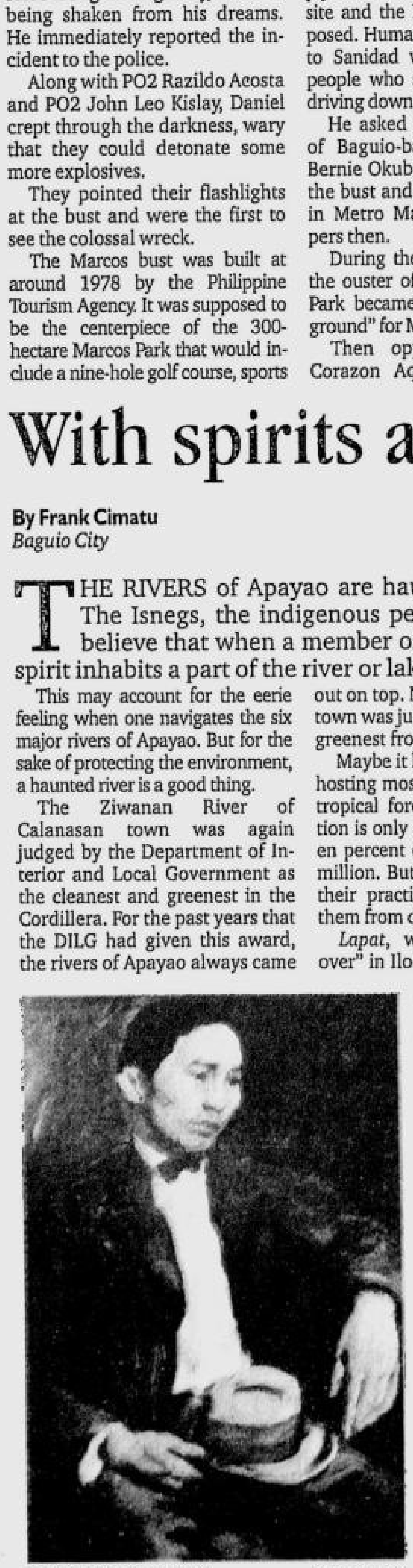
The most important river in the province is the 180-km long Apayao River, which drains three-quarters of Apayao's land area.

As one of the nine major basins of the region, the Apayao River offers potentials for power generation as shown by estimates of the river systems' capacity to generate 700 megawatts of energy.

The construction of the Dacao Dam in the province has been completed to serve the Apayao and Cagayan agricultural areas.

The National Power Corp. also plans to build the Abulug hydroelectric power plant along the Apayao River.

Homecoming for the works of a Pangasinan artist



EDADES' self-portrait. RAY ZAMBRANO

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Dagupan City

FOR THE first time ever, paintings of National Artist Victorio Edades will be viewed by Pangasinenses, most of them unaware that the acclaimed painter and architect came from Dagupan City.

The "Paggalang," an exhibition of Edades' memorabilia and paintings, opened on Dec. 23 at the City Museum, the second floor of which had been renamed Victorio C. Edades Hall in honor of the "Father of Modern Art in the Philippines."

The exhibit is presented by the city government, the Dagupan City Heritage Commission and the Liongoren Gallery and will run until Jan. 19.

Edades was one of the two national artists from Pangasinan, the other being novelist F. Sionil Jose who hails from Rosales town.

On exhibit are two original paintings, five original drawings, several reproductions, and his personal effects like his pipe, paintbrushes, among other things.

"We are bringing a portion of his memorabilia and works of art to his native soil, hoping that we bring back fond memories and bring our people to a richer appreciation, even draw inspiration from his life, works and his art," Norma Liongoren, curator of the Liongoren Gallery in Quezon City, said.

Mayor Benjamin Lim said the exhibit was one of the projects undertaken by the city government to revive the cultural heritage of the city.

He said the other projects are the conversion of an old building of the central elementary school and the Dagupan railroad station into museums.

Cultural heritage

Presidential Adviser on Culture Leticia Shahani, the guest of honor during the exhibit's opening, exhorted Dagupenos to build the city's cultural life and take advantage of its heritage "because after all is said and done, we will be judged by what we did with our cultural heritage."

Edades was a native of Bolosan village in Dagupan. He was born to a poor farming family on Dec. 23, 1895, the youngest of 10 children.

One of the original drawings on display is "My Birthplace Bolosan, Dagupan," a 13.25 x 17.75 inches pencil and ink sketch of the nipa hut where Edades spent his childhood.

Edades graduated valedictorian at the Dagupan Intermediate School in 1915. He graduated with honors at the Pangasinan High School in Lingayen in 1919.

Together with five classmates, Edades went to the United States to study fine arts and architecture at the University of Washington for nine years. He supported his studies by working at the Alaskan salmon canneries as a seasonal laborer and as a furnace operator.

A souvenir program printed to celebrate his 100th birthday in 1995 said part of Edades' educative years was spent in France where he earned diplomas in drawing and painting, and architecture, from the Atelier Grand Chaumier and the American School of Fine Arts Palace of Fontainbleu.

He returned to the Philippines after nine years in America with his wife Jean (of the "How's Your English" fame) and daughter Joan.

Lakas search for presidential candidates on

From page A1

Neither Flavier nor Barbers, however, are considered possible presidential candidates in the latest survey of the Social Weather Stations. Flavier was considered a possible vice presidential candidate in the SWS survey conducted on Dec. 7-15 where he placed third (16 percent), after De Castro (29 percent) and Sen. Loren Legarda (16 percent).

While Roco was left out by De Venecia, the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP), the political party of deposed president Joseph Estrada, considers him the man to beat.

"We expect Roco to get the votes originally meant for President Macapagal," a PMP leader, who requested anonymity, told the INQUIRER when asked how the PMP would rethink its plans for 2004 in the wake of the President's stunning announcement. "Yes, there will be adjustments," he said.

The Lakas executive committee will meet on Jan. 8, according to De Venecia to assess the party's alternative candidates to President Macapagal.

PMP spokesperson Jesus Crispin Remulla said party advisers would meet with Estrada on Jan. 2 to discuss the party strategy in the wake of Ms Macapagal's decision.

Remulla agreed with the observation that Roco was the closest rival of Estrada's preferred 2004 candidate, his show biz pal Fernando Poe Jr.

In the SWS survey of possible presidential candidates, Roco was the choice of 24 percent of the respondents; Poe the choice of 21 percent; De Castro, 19 percent; Ms Macapagal, 13 percent; Sen. Panfilo Lacson, 6 percent; Legarda, 4 percent; Sen. Edgardo Angara, 3 percent; Senate President Franklin Drilon, 2 percent; Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, 2 percent and Vice President Teofisto Guingona, one percent.

"Roco is quite lucky because he is now insulated (from political attacks), having already left the government which is rocked by scandals," Remulla said.

"But there are still 18 months to go (before the elections) and it can make or unmake the candidacies of people depending on how the campaign is run and on how they will defend their image," he said.

ABS-CBN factor

Another development to watch in the next 18 months, he said, would be the "ABS-CBN factor"—or the positioning of media personalities-turned-politicians, De Castro and Legarda. Both are broadcasters of the TV network.

House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said Legarda, Guingona and Drilon could emerge as the possible presidential candidate of the administration.

Guingona, who is supported by certain civil society groups, said on Dec. 20 that he might run for president.

Padilla noted that Legarda had been trying to position herself either as a presidential or vice presidential candidate.

While some sections of the opposition were trying to woo Legarda to its side, Padilla said the "complexion would now change" with Ms Macapagal no longer running. Legarda, he said, "could project herself as an administration bet."

More popular than Guingona

"In terms of popularity, Sen. Legarda is more popular than Guingona," Padilla said.

He said Drilon could also emerge as a contender, being the Senate president who was previously endorsed by some groups for president.

"But we still don't know who President Macapagal's choice is," Padilla said. "Whoever she anoints will be someone to reckon with."

For his part, Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen said he was not expecting Roco aligning himself with the administration in the 2004 presidential race. "He'll have his own party," he said. Roco heads Aksyon Demokratiko, a member of the administration coalition and among the first to declare support for Ms Macapagal during the Edsa II people power uprising in 2001.

Dilangalen said Guingona could emerge as a presidential candidate of the administration, being the Lakas president who has the support of civil society.

Speculations on the standard bearer of Lakas will continue until its executive committee decides on its choice.

The committee includes Ms Macapagal, former President Fidel Ramos, Guingona, Barbers, Flavier, Legarda and Sen. Renato Cayetano. Other members are Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, former Leyte Rep. Sergio Apostol, Gabriel Claudio, Presidential Legal Adviser Avelino Cruz, and Lakas executive director Joey Rufino.

Sought for his comment on the party's future in the wake of Ms Macapagal's announcement on Rizal Day, Ramos said he would defer to the decision of the executive committee.

"I cannot come out with a statement regarding the future of the party before the meeting of the Lakas executive committee," Ramos said in his statement. "The party leaders have to meet so we can come up with a common stand," he said. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

GUINGONA: When you're only No. 2, you try harder.

LEGARDA: Going up in the recent surveys of "presidentiables."

FLAVIER: Emerging as a dark horse, says Lakas co-chair De Venecia.

ROCO: How come Lakas is not talking about survey topnotcher?

Mikey looks forward to normal life with wife and baby Mika

By Gobleth Moulic
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—When presidential granddaughter Mikaela Gloria Montenegro Arroyo joined her family for the first time during the Christmas holidays at the presidential Mansion here, her proud parents had only one wish for their firstborn: "We want her to live a normal life."

Amid the frenzy and political intrigues that continue to hound the first family, two-month-old Mikaela Gloria or Mika, has become the source of joy and inspiration to her grandparents.

"Even if my mother is too busy, she finds time to cuddle the baby and sing her lullabies especially at night," said Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo.

The President gave her first *apo*, who now weighs 10 pounds, a sandbox for Christmas, according to Mikey's wife, Angela.

Although surprised by his mother's decision to withdraw from the 2004 presidential race, Mikey said he and his wife are "very excited" about the prospect of their family being spared by controversies and ugly rumors.

"Now that my mother has announced that she is no longer running, we are looking forward to live a more normal life. (After 2004), we can have a more peaceful life. As a father, I'm very, very excited that my family, especially my daughter, can have a normal life," Mikey said.

For an actor-politician who had weathered a wave of show biz scandals last year, Mikey said it was indeed a breather that his mother will not run.

Fishbowl existence

"We are in a situation where we live in a fishbowl. Whatever (little thing) we do is being magnified. Even if it's not true, people like to talk about you. (That's why) I'm longing to live a normal life again—away from all those intrigues," he said.

Mikey said he will seriously pursue his political career, despite his mother's decision not to run in 2004. "But the difference is that we won't be criticized as before."

The Arroyos and some of their relatives and friends have been vacationing in the country's summer capital since Dec. 26. They are expected to return to Malacañang on Jan. 2.

Leisure time

The First Family visited the strawberry farms in La Trinidad, Benguet and picked fresh strawberries on Sunday.

Ms Macapagal and the First Gentleman played golf in Camp John Hay while the rest of the family enjoyed the chilly nights in Baguio.

On Monday night, the Arroyo children and some relatives huddled before a bonfire at the Mansion's grounds.

The Arroyos attended Masses in local churches and were expected to attend the New Year's Eve Mass at the Baguio Cathedral.

Mikey, who married Angela in June this year, said it was the first time that he spends Christmas and New Year with his own family.

He said the long holiday break gave him a chance to bond with his family because he has been working hard for the past few months, juggling his work in Pampanga and his career in show business.

That wow feeling

"Whenever I go home tired and see my daughter smile, it's wow! I could not describe the feeling. It's great to be a father," he said.

Asked whether he wants his daughter to enter politics and show business like him, he said: "It's up to her. It does not really matter what career she wants to take. I just want her to earn a living in a decent way."

If Mikey would have his way, he would expose Mika to people from all walks of life and bring her to various communities, particularly in his home province of Pampanga.

He said when he was a young boy, his parents allowed him to play with poor children who lived outside their neighborhood, adding that he had befriended the bystanders in his barangay.

"As a father, I won't shield her from anything. It would be better if she learns the truth (by herself). I want her to be exposed to people from all walks of life. When I was growing up, I was exposed to all people. I want my daughter to experience the kind of childhood I had," he said.

While his father, his brother Dato and sister Luli accompany the President in her official duties in Baguio, Mikey is preoccupied with learning how to change Mika's diapers.

As a new father, he also stays late at night to either feed the baby or put her to sleep. "I'm not yet an expert (father) but I'm learning a lot. We are also reading a book about theories on rearing a child," he said.

Annual family reunion

"Mikaela is sleeping all the time. She likes the Baguio weather very well," Angela said.

In 2003, Mika will travel for the first time to Baltimore in the United States sometime in April. It is an annual family get-together for the Montenegros, Angela said.

AND baby Mika makes three which is why presidential son Mikey Arroyo and his wife Angela are learning how to be parents and how to raise their child with the same values learned from President Macapagal and the First Gentleman. PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

From survey loser to 'selfless martyr'

From page A1

some politicians have pointed out that Ms Macapagal's father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, also pulled out of the running in 1961 only to reverse his decision due to popular will.

Little sense

For Ms Macapagal, withdrawing from the 2004 elections makes little sense. First and foremost, it can be seen as an admission of defeat, an acknowledgment that she has been incapable of bringing about any of the economic, social or political changes she promised after taking over for ousted former President Joseph Estrada. Forgoing the 2004 elections also turns Ms Macapagal into a de facto lame-duck President, giving her little of the leverage needed to keep other politicians supporting her policies.

No heir apparent

Ms Macapagal has said that being "relieved of the burden of politics" will allow her to focus more time and efforts on the economy, which continues to lag two years after her rise to power. But although presidential spokesperson and chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao has said that Ms Macapagal's decision will allow her to promote more radical economic policies, it seems unlikely that she could garner the necessary congressional support.

For instance, rather than looking at how their actions could help them position themselves in a second Macapagal administration, politicians now will focus on their own interests, giving Ms Macapagal little leverage over them. Finally, since the President has no heir apparent lined up—as she was thought to be the shoe-in candidate for 2004—her decision not to run could throw her own party into internal chaos as members compete for the candidacy.

4 likely motives

The President's withdrawal announcement likely was motivated by other factors.

First, it portrays her as a martyr, someone willing to forgo personal ambitions for the greater good of the nation. This addresses the immediate problem of ongoing government corruption and cronyism, which helped bring down Estrada and has plagued the Macapagal administration as well.

Second, it throws the opposition parties off balance. Ms Macapagal kept her announcement secret even from her closest political advisers, leaving little chance for the opposition parties to catch wind of her decision. Only a day before the announcement, Ms Macapagal's spokesman had said she was ready to face any and all challengers in the upcoming election. With the President at least tentatively out of the picture, the opposition candidates have each other to battle rather than Ms Macapagal. And they must raise awareness of what they intend to do, rather than simply relying on pointing out what she has been incapable of doing.

Finally, Ms Macapagal might be seeking to shock her own party and force them to rally around her or risk being torn apart by internal bickering. By stepping back, the President potentially places herself in an even higher position in the public eye, making it imperative for members of her party to try even harder to be associated with Ms Macapagal and her "governing-without-politics" movement.

Ultimately, Ms Macapagal is positioned for a place in history, if not for another term in office. She has bought time for herself and her government, and likely will see her popularity in the polls rebound. This strengthens her hand both within her own party and among opponents, who risk public backlash if they criticize the President too much. And should things work out, she, like her father, can bow to the will of the people and put herself back on the ballot before the mid-2004 elections.

Fireworks festival seen to add sparks to RP tourism

From page A1

Tourism's "Visit the Philippines 2003" campaign.

The campaign's kick off this month will include the holding of "weekend fireworks competition" in the Intramuros area. He said the competition was open to all fireworks makers in the country.

The contest will serve as the run up to the country's hosting of an "international pyrotechnic championships" in the Christmas Season of 2003, he said.

It's a novel, ambitious tourism gimmick designed to capitalize on the country's distinction of having the longest Christmas season in the world, according to Gordon.

"Note that when it's Christmas season here, it's also vacation period generally for expats working in our predominantly non-Christian neighbors," he said.

The three-day festival held from Dec. 28 to Dec. 30 was the brainchild of Ricky Crisostomo, president of La Mancha Pyro-Productions, the main man behind the multimillion-peso night sky show of the 1998 Philippine Centennial celebration.

Pursuit of dream

"We (the company) were like the Man from La Mancha who pursued a dream. At first nobody believed we could bring the world champions over here," said Crisostomo, who himself led Philippine contingents in pyrotechnic exhibitions worldwide.

He hopes that the festival would lead to the further development of the local pyrotechnic industry through continued exposure to foreign techniques and presentations.

"Filipino craftsmen are always at home with the best of the world," Crisostomo said, noting that the German, Chinese and Italian experts who took part in the festival still had to rely on local hands to mount their productions.

"But what we are having now is just the the preview of the international competition we intend to hold as part of Visit Philippines 2003," said Crisostomo, referring to Gordon's master plan.

The competition, which is expected to be a new come-on for Philippine tourism, will try to enlist "the top three finishers of the seven to 10 different fireworks competitions in Europe, North America and Asia," he added.

The La Mancha festival saw an orchestra of flaming colors and explosions playing for 30 minutes starting at around 8 p.m.

The rockets were fired from a barge docked in Manila Bay, erupting like the birth of mini galaxies. They took the shape of flowers, twisting discs, or wiggling worms, falling and fading like luminous snow.

Gordon, who joined Crisostomo, reporters and other guests who watched from the roof deck of the Westin Philippine Plaza on Sunday night, said that even fireworks displays could reflect a nation's temper. "The German presentation last night was very precise and logical. The Chinese (whose turn was last Sunday night) was more of organized chaos, like lovemaking where there's foreplay and ...," he said.

The Italian piece closed the festival on Dec. 30, coupled with La Mancha's own entry to a competition in Montreal in July this year.

"This shows that the fireworks industry, like our cuisine and other products we can offer the world, can go international," Gordon said.

"From being mere noisemakers, they become (elements of) a performance," he said. "That's why the department supports entrepreneurs like Ricky (Crisostomo) who take risks and nurture this same belief in what the Filipino can achieve," he said.

Through the just-finished festival, Gordon said, the DOT hoped to attract more local government participation and private sponsorships for the planned fireworks competition.

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SUERTRES (In exact order)
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Vis-Min
4 6 17 20 27 42

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BASKETBALL: NBA - New Orleans vs Indiana, 9:30 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Solar Sports

TENNIS: Hopman Cup - Australia vs Slovak Republic, 9 a.m. (r), USA vs Spain, 4:30 p.m., Star Sports

ATP Tata Open, 7:30 p.m., Star Sports

GOLF: Best of PGA - The Great Upsets, 2 p.m. (r), Star Sports

Magic foil Wizards despite MJ show

ORLANDO—Tracy McGrady had 32 points to lead the Magic to a 112-95 win over the Washington Wizards, despite an impressive performance from Michael Jordan.

Jordan had 21 points, nine assists and eight rebounds for the Wizards, but Washington still slipped to 4-11 on the road as Orlando won its second straight game despite Grant Hill being out with a foot injury.

Jerry Stackhouse added 18 points for Washington.

Pat Garrity had 21 points for Orlando while Mike Miller added 20. Darrell Armstrong had eight points and 11 assists.

In Detroit, Rasheed Wallace scored 19 points to lead the Portland Trail Blazers to their eighth straight victory, an 85-74 win over the Detroit Pistons on Monday.

Bonzi Wells added 17 points for Portland (18-11), which blew a 13-point third quarter lead and allowed Detroit to tie the game at 68-68 with 8:20 left in the fourth quarter.

But the Trail Blazers went on a 15-0 run after that to end the Pistons two-game winning streak.

Derek Anderson added 14 points as Portland scored its fifth straight win over Detroit and eighth in the last nine meetings between the two teams.

Richard Hamilton scored 22 points for Detroit, while Corliss Williamson added 16 off the bench. Forward Ben Wallace had eight points and 20 rebounds.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Orlando 112, Washington 95; New York 96, San Antonio 95; New Jersey 102, Cleveland 88; Miami 93, Atlanta 84; Portland 85, Detroit 74; Minnesota 104, Phoenix 98; Milwaukee 110, Dallas 107; Seattle 79, Denver 77; Utah 107, Toronto 85; Golden State 104, Philadelphia 98. *AP*

Jordan: His Airness never fades

By Laura MacInnis
Reuter Writer

WASHINGTON—His team are mediocre, the media glare has faded and he is prone to shoot the odd air ball but Michael Jordan is not approaching retirement on a lukewarm note.

Seven weeks shy of his 40th birthday, the five-time NBA Most Valuable Player still holds court before sold-out Washington Wizards home games, delighting fans and giving his young opponents a scare.

"Man, I don't care how old he is or whatever people want to say. He is still the biggest threat in this league," fourth-year Portland Trail Blazers guard Bonzi Wells said recently after his first encounter with Jordan.

"Being on the court with him is an intimidation factor for a lot of guys. Guys my age grew up on Jordan. When you finally go on the court with him, you're kind of like a deer in headlights," he said, smiling and shaking his head.

Jordan, whose resume includes six NBA championships with the Chicago Bulls, an Olympic gold medal and two slam-dunk titles, retired from professional basketball in 1998 saying he had nothing left to prove.

Five years later, the 1.98-metre guard is in the Washington Wizards' starting line-up. He strolls casually around the court during warm-ups, blowing bubble gum and good-naturedly needling his younger team mates and opponents under the gaze of more than 20,000 fans at the MCI Center.

His decision last year to return to the game and play for Washington's less-than-stellar team baffled some pundits who said he was risking his legacy.

Happy fans

But fans are clearly enthusiastic about Jordan's final lap of the NBA tour before his planned retirement in 2003.

"He's not living up to the old Michael Jordan but just a little Michael Jordan is better than nothing," said Washington resident Wayne Banks. "It's good for the game. He's bringing the fans back out." The Wizards have sold out 56 consecutive home games, including all 41 of their Washington games last season. On the road, the team have sold out all but four games this season.

JORDAN/A17

JORDAN (left) runs around Orlando Magic guard Tracy McGrady during their game at the TD Waterhouse Centre in Orlando, Florida, last Monday. The Magic won, 112-95. AFP

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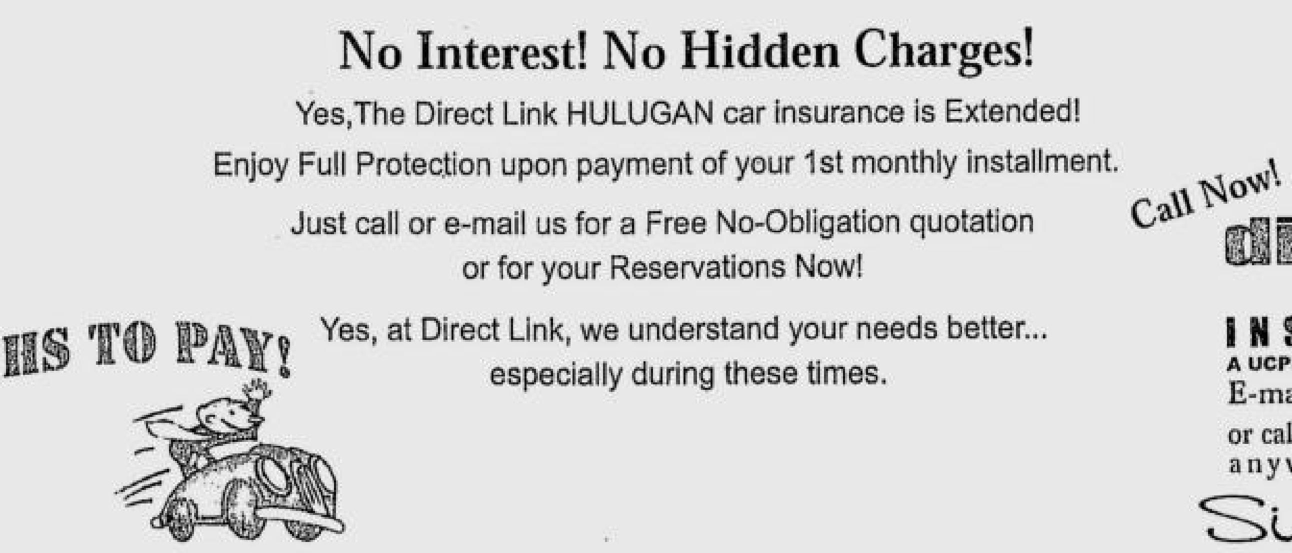

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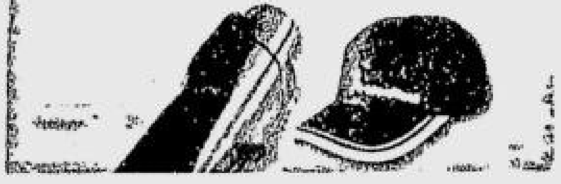

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Garcia rules Ilusorio Cup

BAGUIO CITY—Raffy Garcia captured the 3rd Nanoy Ilusorio Cup recently at the Baguio Country Club golf course here.

Sharing the limelight was 17-year-old TJ Filler, a BCC junior golfer who scored a hole-in-one at the par 3, 159-yard first hole.

Nanette Filler ruled the ladies Class A division of the tournament handled superbly by Anthony de Leon, the BCC general manager.

The tournament was conceived by the late Potenciano Ilusorio, a golfer, sportsman and philantrophist who is also the chair for life and president emeritus of the BCC.

TJ Filler used an 8-iron and a Topflite No. 1 ball in scoring the feat.

Rep. Mauricio Domogan, the city's former mayor, won the tournament in 2000 before Octavio Espiritu took it in 2001.

'Despite loss, Jao impressed a lot'

SEPANG, Malaysia—Jolet Jao's respectable showing in the recent FIM Asia Road Racing Championship here was a good sign for local motorsports.

This was the opinion of Asian Motocross Union (AMU) president Macky Carapiet shortly upon their arrival from the three-day championships organized by the Two Wheels Motor Racing (Malaysia).

"Although he did no finish highly, Jolet's respectable showing in Penang augurs well for the development of local motorsports," Carapiet said.

"Jolet impressed a lot of people, especially the Japanese and Malaysian race officials. I think he did very well considering this was only the first time that he competed in the prestigious series," added Carapiet, who is also secretary general of the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa).

A former rider himself, Carapiet said Jao's exceptional showing proved that Filipino riders can more than hold their own against their foreign counterparts given the proper exposure and training.

"Jolet's performance should open the door for other Filipino riders to join future international competitions," explained Carapiet. "I'm sure Japanese and Malaysian race organizers would be more than willing to invite Filipino riders in their own competitions."

Trust

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I KNOW that Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski will agree with the view that "to do well in equestrian competitions, horses and riders must know and trust each other completely." Marvelous Mikee, 28-year-old daughter of former Tarlac Rep. Peping Cojuangco and ex-Gov. Tingting, won the gold medal in the individual show jumping event of the Busan Asian Games atop Rustic Rouge, an eight-year-old mare gifted her by husband Dodot after previous horse, Luisita, suffered an injury months before the Asiad.

"Riders and horses communicate through body language, or muscle-to-nerve signals that each understands," once said veteran Olympic rider Kelli Temple of Canada in an interview with the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "We have conversations, maybe not verbal. But in everything I do with them, I'm communicating with them and they're communicating back with me." She added riders pamper their horses not just to keep them healthy, but to build the bonds of trust and affection that make the horse want to do what the rider asks. Horses in training are athletes who work hard for a living. "Being happy in their bodies makes them happy in their minds and makes them enjoy their work."

In the same interview, Peter Grant, the coach/trainer for the Canadian equestrian team, said, "You develop the same rapport that you do with your dog. They really want to please you." Horses under his care live in large and comfortable stalls where they are treated well.

A typical day in the life of Olympic horses: The horses rise and shine early at 7 a.m. for a big breakfast of grains and hay. One hour later, they saddle up for a nice, easy ride to warm up, with their legs and feet swathed in polo wraps and leather boots for protection.

At 9:30 a.m., horses and riders go to the training ring for practice drills and jumps after which they are hosed down, manes and tails shampooed. They stand knee-deep in cooling whirlpool boots to ease aching leg and muscles and lessen swelling. Sore backs are massaged, spines are straightened by chiropractors. At noon, they have lunch and in the afternoon, they graze and relax. At 6 p.m. it's dinner and early to bed, covered up with an electromagnetic blanket that gently massages their muscles to keep them relaxed and loose.

There are three Olympic horse sports. In dressage, horses execute a series of complex gaits (foot movements), responding to hidden cues from the rider. The endurance segment is a punishing cross-country run over rough terrain. Horses jump at full gallop over walls and ditches. In the show jumping event, the horse jumps 15 times at a slow pace, to show judges that it is still strong, balanced and agile.

In the Busan Asiad, Mikee actually ended up tied for first place with a Korean rider after the regulation run. But the stout-hearted Filipina mother of two scored a perfect run in the decider to clinch the coveted gold.

"In terms of anything I've done in public, that was my proudest moment," said Mikee in a recent interview. "But in my personal life, I have proud moments watching my kids (Robbie and Rafael)."

PBA PRESS CORPS

Coach of the Year: Close race

GUIAO

PDI PHOTOS

CONE

GREGORIO

REYES

THE 2002 Samsung PBA Press Corps Awards Night, co-presented by San Miguel Beer and Barangay Ginebra, will be held on Jan. 4 starting at 8 p.m. at the Tropies Room of the Bayview Hotel along Roxas Blvd.

Vying for the Coach of the Year honors are champion coaches Ryan Gregorio of Purefoods, Yeng Guiao of Red Bull and Chot Reyes of Coca-Cola, and Tim Cone who steered his Alaska Aces to two losing championship stints in the season.

Guiao is in the running for back-to-back Coach of the Year honors. Reyes and Cone both have a chance to win the award for the second time after 1994 and 1997, respectively, while Gregorio could make a record winning the Baby Dalupan Trophy while calling the shots for his team on an interim basis.

The winner will be announced on the Awards Night.

Gregorio and his Purefoods Hotdogs ruled the Governors Cup, Guiao and his Thunder the Commissioner's Cup, and Reyes and his Tigers the All-Filipino. Cone and his Aces figured in the finals of the first and third conferences.

Outgoing PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino is the guest of honor while incoming commissioner Noli Eala is the guest speaker during the ceremonies in which the PBA Press Corps salutes PBA personalities who excelled in their respective fields in the season.

Ronnie Magsanoc, who came back from semi-retirement and played a key role in Purefoods' conquest of the Governors Cup, is the hands-down choice for the Comeback Player of the Year.

Red Bull team owner George Chua and RFM Corp. top honcho Joey Concepcion are contesting the Executive of the Year award.

Coca-Cola's Ato Morano, Purefoods' Roger Yap, Talk N Text's Kenny Evans and Sta. Lucia's Gerard Francisco are slugging it out for the Mr. Quality Minutes plum while Red Bull's Davonn Harp, Alaska's Rob Duat, Shell's Cris Jackson, Red Bull's Junthy Valenzuela and Purefoods' Rey Evangelista are fighting for the Defensive Player of the Year trophy.

Former awardee Ogie Bernarte, Mario Montiel and Aldava are the candidates for the Referee of the Year.

Ernie de Leon will be elevated to the Hall of Fame for winning the Referee of the Year honors for a record six times.

Elmer Yanga and Cecilio Pedro of Lamoiyan Group of Companies will be given plaques of recognition for their support of the press corps.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Jonas Cruz beat Darwin Laylo in 48 moves of a Gruenfeld defense to bag the Mega Power Philippines Kiddies Chess tournament at the Metropolitan Chess Club in Manila. Also today in 1993, Arnel Bas timed 1 hour, 26 minutes, 47 seconds to clinch the second leg of the Danao City International Mountain Bike race.

RP batters blank China behind a 1-hitter

HONG KONG—The Philippines banked on a one-hitter by Ernesto Binarao to beat China's youth national selection, 7-0, recently in the 3rd Zhujiang Cup International Invitational baseball tournament here.

Binarao just touched once, walked four times, and struck out nine batters in six and a half innings.

Ruben Angeles, Ricardo Jimenez and Marlon Castillo starred for the RP batters with two runs each, while Virgilio Roxas scored a solo home run in the fifth inning.

The Filipinos made seven runs, 12 hits and committed two errors.

Head coach Ely Baradas said the team is already preparing for Chinese Taipei, which is the only obstacle for the Philippines on the road to the finals.

Earlier, Chinese Taipei defeated Hong Kong, 9-3.

Meanwhile, the Philippines will stage a tournament in April where teams from China, Chinese Taipei, India, Pakistan, Iran, Guam, Palau, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore are taking part.

Hewitt, Molik power Australia to a 2-0 lead over Slovakia

PERTH, Australia — Alicia Molik and Lleyton Hewitt gave Australia a winning 2-0 lead in its Hopman Cup team tennis match against Slovakia on Tuesday.

Molik beat Daniela Hantuchova 6-4, 6-2, the second straight loss in the tournament for the world eighth-ranked player.

It was the first win over a top-10 player by Molik, who is ranked 94th, and her second straight win in the tournament after beating Italian world No. 17 Silvia Farina Elia on Sunday.

Hewitt easily beat Dominik Hrbaty 6-2, 6-0 in the men's singles, with a mixed doubles match to follow.

Molik's powerful serve and heavy ground strokes frustrated an error-riddled Hantuchova. Molik had numerous break-point opportunities in the first set and finally cracked Hantuchova's serve on her ninth break point in the ninth game.

She then served out the set with an ace. Hantuchova fell apart in the second set as the 21-year-old Molik cruised to victory in 66 minutes.

It was the only match played Tuesday. On Wednesday, the United States takes on Spain and the Czech Republic plays Italy.

AP

Best basketball clinics start Jan. 4

MILO Best Center starts its 2003 program by staging separate Saturday and Sunday-only basketball clinics starting on Jan. 4.

Level 1, 2, 3, 4 and refresher classes will be held every Saturday at Ateneo College covered courts from Jan. 4 to Feb. 22 while level 1, 2 and 3 sessions will be conducted every Sunday at St. Benedict College from Jan. 5 to Feb. 23.

Classes at Ateneo and St. Benedict will be held from 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m., respectively.

For further details, interested parties may visit or call either The Best Center at 34 Scout Lozano, Barangay Laging Handa, QC, tel. nos. 411-6260 and 372-2065 or at Dansei Groom Shop/Sensei Salon, 5th Floor, Holiday Inn Manila, UN Avenue, tel. no. 525-8191.

Meanwhile, the two-level Milo Best Women's Volleyball League will open on Jan. 12 at the St. Benedict College courts in Alabang Hills.

Jordan: His Airness...

From page A16

At the MCI Center, the crowd erupt in applause as their hero is introduced over the loudspeakers, with children craning for a glimpse of the famed number 23. One boy proudly holds a sign reading: "We believe in you Air Jordan!". To win in Washington, opponents say they need to keep an eye on Jordan no matter where he is on the court.

"He is one of those guys who is going to be so smart that if the game is on the line, nine times out of 10 he is going to deliver a win," said Trail Blazers guard Derek Anderson.

"Fourth quarter, seconds going down, he's a threat. And during the course of a game we have to worry about the whole team because he makes the whole team better." Portland's rebounding muscle Dale Davis said he was happy to see Jordan "getting out there and doing his thing," adding that the 13-time All-Star's place in the game's history was secure.

"He is no doubt the greatest player to ever play the game," Davis said. "A man of his stature as a basketball player, a lot comes with that. He is capable of putting up big numbers so you have to contain him as much as possible."

Coaching role

Like fellow basketball greats Larry Bird, Isaiah Thomas and Patrick Ewing, Jordan has moved into a coaching role in the twilight of his career, guiding young players from the court and the bench.

Jordan, who turns 40 on February 17, is the team's second-leading scorer at 16 points a game but he is just as valuable mentoring the club's promising youngsters such as the 20-year-old Kwame Brown, the number one overall pick in the 2001 NBA Draft.

Having publicly chided his players at times, Jordan said recently he would need to increase his playing time if "some of these young kids don't start to play up to their capabilities". "If they don't play well, and we're not winning, then obviously we've got to go to an area where you can count on," he said. "I'd like to think hopefully you can count on me." Jordan was clearly dejected after losing 98-79 to Portland earlier this month in his first head-to-head match-up with longtime Bulls team mate Scottie Pippen, in which both players scored 14 points.

"I know Pip, and I know he wanted to come out and play well, and believe me I wanted to come out and play well too," he told reporters in the locker room.

"His horses were ready and my mules were sick. I have to take some razzing for the time being...you take it and you move on with it."

Presence felt

Pippen, who at 37 has not said when he plans to retire, said it was unfair to compare the two players at this point in their careers.

"He's still the greatest," he said. "Michael's presence out in the game is still felt. It may not show in the scoreboard but he's still doing a lot of things that support the team," said Pippen, selected in 1996 as one of the 50 best NBA players of all time.

Jordan rebounded from a career-low shooting record in his next game in Toronto -- netting only two points against the Raptors -- to score 30 in Atlanta and another 33 against Memphis at home, his highest this season.

Washington coach Doug Collins praised the player for his tenacity.

"I don't know how he does it," Collins said. "I don't know where the will and the spirit and the energy all comes from. But he's the most resilient, proudest man I've ever seen around -- ever. He's amazing." After playing in Washington, the 26-year-old Wells said that Jordan had inspired him and other young players by staying on the court, not letting his waning skills affect his love for the game.

"It was a big-time experience just meeting the guy and being in his presence," he said. "And then playing against him? And beating him? Man, that was the best day of my life."

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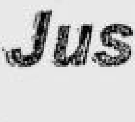

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See flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 8291 Series of 2002

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FILMFEST SCANDAL

Guillen: The industry is hurting, stop the pain

By Nini Valera

SO IT has come to this: A denizen of Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan might sit on the board of jurors of next year's Metro Manila Film Festival if Caloocan mayor and festival committee chair Rey Malonzo would have his way.

"I would choose judges from among the common *tao*," Malonzo told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"Like this year, I chose a young board member of Isabela province to be one of the judges, Jojie Borromeo. So there would be someone new. All of us (movie veterans), we're all good already. So why not a cigarette vendor, for example?"

But for awards-laden director Laurice Guillen, Malonzo's plan would only be punishment for the industry that is struggling to survive.

"It seems like he wants to punish the industry," she said. "What does he want, a cigarette vendor? Come on."

"Dekada 70" director Chito Roño was momentarily speechless, and his jaw dropped. But his raised eyebrows howled in protest.

After he managed to unhinge his jaw, Roño also found his tongue and said, calmly and seriously, "They should choose judges that we could believe in. Not judges (without film credentials). If you say you will get a judge from Dagat-dagatan, then make it a Dagat-dagatan Film Festival. Let's not pretend anymore that this is the Metro Manila Film Festival, which should be the pinnacle of the industry."

Guillen could barely hide her pain.

"The industry is hurting," she said. "Stop the pain, please."

Her longtime companion Johnny Delgado, said that Malonzo's choice of judges was all about control.

"They want to control the judges," Delgado said. "They want to control the industry. This has diminished the value of the awards."

"They did not even exert an effort to choose judges that are pillars of the industry," said director Olivia Lamasan.

A veteran of foreign film fests, Roño observed that in such competitions, the judges are "people you could respect."

He said that they are not only popular, but they are popular and respected in their field, be it in literature, film criticism or special effects.

"They know their aesthetics, their sound engineering," Guillen said.

Malonzo, however, dismissed such misgivings about the judges' competence and asked, "Am I incompetent? Is Rustica Carpio incompetent? What about the winner? Are they calling us incompetent?"

He said that they had invited so many industry stalwarts to judge, but most of them had declined. He also noted that Roño's "Yamashita" was last year's Best Picture and Roño accepted the accolade without protest.

"Now that his film lost to Joey Lamangan's ("Mano Po"), he's complaining. What about our choice of Piolo Pascual for Best Supporting Actor for 'Dekada?' *Mali ba 'yon?*"

In the same manner, Roño should not complain about the way in which the films were judged since the board had a set of criteria that served as its Bible in the two days of viewing the nine entries in the film fest, according to Malonzo.

The guidelines for nominations, judging and tabulation of votes that the INQUIRER obtained showed the criteria for judging:

GUILLEN/ A20

MALONZO

GUILLEN

ROÑO

GMA DECISION

'Good for country, bad for politicians'

By Tina Santos, Jerome Aning and Agnes Donato

LOCAL government officials of Metro Manila yesterday presented a united stand in hailing President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's decision that she will no longer run in the 2004 elections.

Ms Macapagal made the pronouncement on Monday in her 15-minute speech delivered during the Rizal Day rites at the Rizal Park in Baguio City.

Malabon-Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval summed it up best when he described President Macapagal's decision as "good for the country, but bad for the people in politics."

"Let's watch out what she's going to do in the next few months," Sandoval added. "Definitely she's not going to make popular decisions now after her pronouncement. She would now make hard decisions that may hurt even her partymates.

"Now she can finally reform the economy since she cannot be threatened anymore.

"She can freely decide without taking into consideration what the people in government, even her allies, would think and feel.

"It was a good decision," said Malabon Mayor Amado Vicencio. "Now the President will have more time to attend to more pressing matters that plague our country. I believe her sincerity when she said she would no longer run but still, let's wait and see. The elections is in 2004, and from now until that time, a lot of things can still happen."

According to Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco, the President's decision did not really surprise him.

"But I believe her, there's no question about her sincerity when she made the pronouncement," he said. "It only showed that she is willing to forego her own political ambition for the sake of the nation."

In his reaction, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. took on a sober tone.

"I for one wish she were running," he said. "But I want to respect her decision. I believe she has been clear with her explanation. She will probably have a difficult time achieving things, given the bad (political) climate."

"Let's set aside politics for next year and unite and rally behind (the President) to work for

GOOD/ A20

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3 cops held for kidnap

By Leila Salaverria and Philip Tubeza

THREE policemen and a civilian agent were arrested in Makati for abducting and robbing a 29-year-old trader on Monday.

But the Makati investigator handling the case is himself in hot water after the arrested civilian agent escaped, together with the loot, while in police custody.

Suspects PO3 Robinson O. Delos Reyes, of the PNP Custodial Section, PO2 Lutgardo L. Ramirez of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, PO2 Leonardo L. Doblada of WPD Station 8, and CIDG civilian agent Teotimo C. Castro, allegedly took the P80,000 cash and Nokia 3310 cellular phone of businessman Quimal G. Pukunum, 29, of Tandang Sora, Quezon City, said investigator SPO4 Cecilio Sacorum of the Western Police District.

WPD investigators are trying to find out how Castro escaped.

Manila lawmen are also trying to determine what happened to the loot. Castro pretended he wanted to pee and disappeared Pukunum's P80,000 and cellphone.

The WPD is also hunting down another accomplice of the suspects.

SMART zed
HITLIST
LOOK
LISTEN
LOGO THORNS
LOGO SWEETHEART
LOGO SHOOTHEART
LOGO NUDE2
LOGO LUVLAY
LOGO JESUS
LOGO DRAGON7
LOGO DRACO
LOGO BZZZ
LOGO BUNNYLOVE
LOGO ZED LOOK
LOGO TUGOWAR
LOGO STROLL
LOGO SPARKS
LOGO SHEPHERD
LOGO PARTEE
LOGO MADFISH
LOGO LOVESTORY
LOGO HORIZON2
LOGO GRIN
LOGO FWORKS
LOGO EYELASH
LOGO EXPLOSIVE
LOGO COUPLE2
LOGO COUNTDOWN
LOGO BROOM
LOGO BIRTH2
LOGO BARBER
LOGO BANG
LOGO ALMS
PIC XMASNYEAR
PIC TUTA
PIC TRIP
PIC TOYS
PIC SYMBOL
PIC STORMYNYT
PIC LUVPUP
PIC LANDING
PIC JESUS4
PIC HNY
PIC HAPIHOL
PIC FALL
PIC DOVE2
PIC BIGGIE
PIC 1STSITE
PIC PUSO1
PIC WARPLANE1
PIC PUSO2
PIC WARPLANE2
PIC PUSO3
PIC WARPLANE3
Happy New Year 2003
SMART Simply Amazing!
Grab our explosive New Year's downloads.

Give Me Just A Little More Time	Dunber/Wayne	TONE GIVEME
Insensitive	Jann Arden	TONE INSENSITIVE
Kaleidoscope World	Francis M.	TONE KALEIDOS
Kisapmata	Rivermaya	TONE KISAPMATA
Munsters Theme	Marshall/Mosher	TONE MUNSTERS
Tayo'y Mga Pinoy	Francis M.	TONE TAYOYPINOY
I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing	Chet Atkins	TONE TEACHWORLD
Should I Stay Or Should I Go	The Clash	TONE STAYORGO
Cruel Summer	Bananarama	TONE CRUEL
Praise You	Fatboy Slim	TONE PRAISEU

Asereje	Las Ketchup	TONE ASEREJE
Bakit Papa	Sex Bomb	TONE BAKITPAPA
Sk8erboi	Avril Lavigne	TONE SK8ERBOI
Wasting	Default	TONE WASTING
Dilemma	Nelly	TONE DILEMMA
Complicated	Avril Lavigne	TONE COMPLICATED
Spiderman	Movie Theme	TONE SPIDERMAN
Cry	Mandy Moore	TONE CRY1
Best In Me	Blue	TONE BESTINME
Next In Line	After Image	TONE NXTINLINE

Has your heart been stolen? Then start collecting our heart picture messages. Or start collecting your fleet of cool warplane picture messages!

Greet your friend with a SMART zed picture message. Type PIC <keyword> <cell phone number> <your message> and send to 288. Example: PIC PUSO3 9187654321 hi honey, i luv u muah!

How to dowload a logo, ring tone or picture message:

1 Type in keyword Ex. LOGO BANG, TONE DILEMMA, or PIC FALL
2 Send to 288.
3 Save upon receiving logo, ring tune or picture message.

Send logo, tone or picture message to another subscriber, type <keyword> <cell phone number> and send to 288. Ex. LOGO BANG 09181234567, TONE DILLEMA 09181234567 or PIC FALL 09181234567

To download all these from your SMART Super SIM, simply go to the SMART Menu, select SMART zed and then select My Favorites. Just click on the service you wish to download. It's so easy!

Logos, ring tones and picture messages are supported by selected Nokia handsets. Also available to Talk 'N Text subscribers. P15.00 for every successful download.

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As long as you've got SMART zed CHAT, all you need to chat is your SMART cellone. No need for a computer or internet access. Now you can chat anytime, anywhere and with whomever you want. Now nothing's going to stop you from chatting!

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How to start chatting thru SMART zed:

Start chatting

CHAT CREATE LIMBO M 23 FUN-LOVING
Create your nickname. Type CHAT CREATE <nick> <sex> <age> <description> and send to 288.

CHAT ACTIVE Any one care to chat?
Type CHAT ACTIVE <your message> and send to 288. Your message will be sent to the last 5 active chat users.

or

CHAT TOM HI TOM!
Type CHAT <nick of the person you wish to chat with> <your message> and send to 288. Your message will be sent to the specified chat user only.

Note: Please be selective in giving out your actual cell phone number to other chatters. Always practice courtesy and common sense when chatting. Never divulge personal information. P2.50 per chat message sent. Send CHAT HELP to 288 to get more info on how to use SMART zed Chat. Also available to Talk 'N Text subscribers.

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LITTLE HORN-BLOWERS
Would that people welcome the year, the way these children aim to. Scaring away demons of the past year need not be a deafening, debilitating experience.
ERIK ARAZAS

Car thief killed in QC shootout

By Alcuin Papa

A SUSPECTED car thief was gunned down when he and his cohorts decided to shoot it out with members of the Central Police District in Quezon City yesterday morning.

Members of the CPD District Police Intelligence Unit were on patrol when they spotted two men on board an unmarked Toyota Corolla at around 1 a.m. on Commonwealth near University Avenue, Barangay UP Diliman, Quezon City.

When the policemen tried to flag down the vehicle, the car suddenly sped away with the occupants firing at the lawmen.

This prompted the policemen to fire back. After a few meters, the vehicle came to a stop. One of the occupants made a run for it, jumping over a fence leading to the University of the Philippines campus.

One of the suspects was found dead inside the car.

The unidentified suspect was described as around 38 years old, stood about 5-foot-7, fair, and had a tattoo bearing the words "Bobby Lang Caoun." He was wearing a pair of denim pants and a white sando. The suspect had several gunshot wounds in the body.

The lawmen searched the car and found a .357-caliber revolver, a bladed weapon, ammunition, and the vehicle's license plates (TWL-758).

Policemen are now tracking down the second suspect.

PAL official, wife hurt in grenade attack

By Christian Esguerra

A PHILIPPINE Air Lines supervisor and his wife were seriously hurt when an unidentified man lobbed a grenade in the victim's backyard in Muntinlupa City Monday night.

Generoso Ignacio, 54, PAL technical training supervisor, and his 53-year-old wife Alicia suffered multiple shrapnel wounds in the body, police said.

They are confined at the Medical Center of Muntinlupa.

Police could not yet tell the motive behind the grenade attack.

Ignacio and his wife were doing their laundry when a man threw a grenade in the backyard of their house on Hi-Point Street, Diamond Park, Barangay Tunasan at around 11:30 p.m., police records showed.

Investigators said the man might have climbed a ladder that was propped on the victims' concrete fence before he hurled the grenade.

When policemen searched the backyard of the couple's house, they found the grenade's safety pin and two pieces of shrapnel.

GMA delivers biggest New Year blast

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HUGE and grotesque, it was a dirty reminder of an evil reign.

So, thank you to whoever blasted to bits the Marcos bust in La Union.

You know, it was the one great wish of nationalist Antonio Zumel to have that concrete Marcos likeness devastated. Zumel said he had actually made initial plans to carry out the plot.

Ka Tony confided that to this reporter during a secret meeting in Angono many years ago, when Ferdinand Marcos still ruled the country.

If he had had his way, if his frail health had permitted, Ka Tony, National Democratic Front stalwart, would've personally planted a bomb to demolish that testament to tyranny.

But, come to think of it, how could you merit a national monument without faking war medals, without having to resort to dark deeds and assorted fakery?

Answer: by being true to yourself.

***

This could be a bit exaggerated, but the greatest blast to welcome the New Year was not exploded in any neighborhood hereabouts.

The biggest bang came on Dec. 30, Jose Rizal's death anniversary in Baguio City.

It was ignited by no less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo when she made the supreme sacrifice and announced she was skipping the 2004 presidential poll.

Unlike ordinary fireworks, no matter the scale, GMA's vow not to run for the Presidency will reverberate indefinitely, not only to shake up the political scene, but hopefully to unify our divided country.

Because the President did it quietly before a bust of Dr. Jose Rizal, wouldn't it be right to conclude that, with such epic gesture, she also has instantly carved out a national monument for herself?

***

Naturally, there were the doubters.

Like that congresswoman who bared how she had grown in greed and treachery by claiming the GMA act smacked of political trickery.

Truth is the epic decision did not happen overnight.

The President confided she had mulled the move nearly 10 months ago, without dropping any hint to Palace officials and party mates.

Said she: "One year after my administration, I reviewed all that had been achieved, what has not been achieved, what has to be achieved, and even then, there was a problem with national unity. I gave myself until Rizal Day to make my decision."

All one could do was stand up and applaud.

Nothing of this selfless sort had happened in Philippine politics before.

And nobody could have put it more succinctly than the newspaper Today which said on page one yesterday: "For many who attended the Rizal Day ceremonies, the 21-gun salute and shower of rose petals honoring the 106th death anniversary of Rizal's martyrdom may well have been a tribute to her (GMA) too."

Repeat, the President, with that gracious gesture, has instantly carved out a monument for herself.

Our Woman of the Year exploded what would go down as the Loudest, Biggest, Greatest Blast of the New Year.

A happy new dawn to you all!

2 cops caught robbing actress' kin

By Philip Tubeza

TWO MANILA policemen are in hot water for allegedly robbing the 20-year-old nephew of actress Aurora Sevilla in Manila.

The victim also happens to be the son of an executive of the Manila Broadcasting Company, the owner of radio station dzRH.

Victim Jonas Sevilla, of Sta. Ana, Manila, accused SPO2 Julius Payoyo and SPO1 Ernesto Manaois, both of Western Police District Station 10, of accosting him and his friend and taking his P1,500.

The victim allegedly got the money from a godparent.

Sevilla told investigators that on Dec. 25, he and his friend, Pong Martinez, were on board a motorcycle when the uniformed lawmen blocked their path in Sta. Ana, Manila at around 7:45 p.m., on the pretext that they had to check for illegal drugs.

The policemen then frisked the young men and allegedly found a sachet of shabu in Martinez's possession.

Payoyo then had Martinez board his jeep while Manaois rode with Sevilla on the victim's big bike. They were supposed to go to the police station.

But Sevilla's bike had engine trouble, and so they had to stop at a gasoline station in Paco.

While at the gas station, Manaois allegedly reached into Sevilla's pocket and took P1,500 from the victim.

The policeman then allegedly told him to either pay up or face criminal charges.

The victim later reported the lawmen's criminal activities to investigators at the Western Police District headquarters.

Police are preparing to file robbery charges against Manaois and Payoyo before the Manila Prosecutor's Office.

METROBRIEFS

Raped

A 15-YEAR-OLD boy said to be hooked on pirated X-rated video CDs raped his 16-year-old half-sister in Mandaluyong City, police said. The victim told desk officers at the Western Police District that her half-brother raped her at about 1 p.m. on Friday inside their home, while her mother and foster father were away. She said the suspect was hooked on pornographic CDs that his father, allegedly an employee of the Videogram Regulatory Board, had brought home. She said her stepfather is a member of a VRB team that hunt down peddlers of fake CDs. The victim said her half-brother forced his way into her room and raped her. She said that he simply left after he finished assaulting her.

Philip Tubeza

Drugged

AN 18-YEAR-OLD girl yesterday accused an alleged agent of the National Bureau of Investigation of forcing her to use prohibited drugs and of punching her several times in his house in Makati City. Still reeling from the blows and the effects of shabu on her, Pamela Montemayor, of Teacher's Village in Quezon City, told police that a certain John Sandoval of Barangay Pio del Pilar in Makati, took her to his house at about 2 a.m. Monday. She said that she met Sandoval in Quezon City last Sunday night. Montemayor said after they were introduced, he asked her to board his Land Cruiser before he drove over to his house where he forced her to use shabu. She also accused Sandoval of punching her several times. Police said Montemayor has yet to give a statement on the incident, adding that she was groggy when she went to the station to file her complaint. Investigators said she could not explain why she was with Sandoval.

Leila Salaverria

Killed

ELENA Cendana, 54, and her niece Athea, 3, were supposed to visit their relatives for the holidays in Bicutan, Taguig on Monday. But they did not reach their destination. Elena and Athea, both of Pandacan, Manila, were killed when a train ran over them at the Philippine National Railways terminal in Pandacan at 9:19 a.m., said Insp. Ernesto Basilio of the Western Police District. The victims' heads and bones were crushed, Basilio said. "Elena's son said the victims were on their way to visit relatives in Bicutan," Basilio said. "They apparently tried to get on the train when it was already moving." Basilio said train operator Bayani Maningning, 50, of Tayuman Compound, Tondo, escaped right after the accident. The police are now looking for him.

Philip Tubeza

Shot

ROBERTO dela Peña, 27, was shot to death in Quezon City last Friday for stealing pieces of metal. Dela Peña, of Sitio Pajo, Barangay Baesa, Quezon City, died on Monday at the Quezon City General Hospital, police said. Willie Chavez, 45, a businessman of Barangay Bahay Toro, Quezon City, turned himself over to authorities after the shooting. According to SPO1 Ramon Fernandez of the Central Police District, Chavez saw the victim and his nephew, Marcelino dela Peña, picking up pieces of metal on his property at around 1:15 p.m. Chavez immediately pulled out a handgun and fired on the victim. Chavez is now detained awaiting the filing of charges.

Alcuin Papa

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, January 1, 2003
Mary, Mother of God

1st Reading: Num 6:22-27
2nd Reading: Gal 4:4-7
Gospel: Lk 2:16-21

The shepherds came hurriedly and found Mary and Joseph with the baby lying in the manger. On seeing this they related what they had been told about the child, and all were astonished on hearing the shepherds.

As for Mary, she treasured all these messages and continually pondered over them.

The shepherds then returned giving glory and praise to God for all they had heard and seen, just as the angels had told them.

On the eighth day the circumcision of the baby had to be performed; he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Commentary

"May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace." This final benediction in the threefold blessing Aaron and his sons are to invoke on Israel is a blessing we too long for. As a new year begins, with its promise and its dangers, we pray for peace, which is not just the absence of war and conflict, but rather, the shalom that God desires for his people: well-being, security, trust and acceptance among peoples, friendship with God, fullness of life. What confirms us in our hope for peace in the midst of the uncertainties of our time is Paul's insistence that "God sent his Son, born of a woman... to enable us to be adopted as sons and daughters." We are not slaves, therefore, but children of God, and therefore, Paul confidently asserts, heirs as well. There is a rich inheritance of life and shalom prepared for us by the God Jesus taught us to call Abba, Father. We would do well then to follow the example of the maiden of Nazareth, the Mother of God, Mary, who "kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LEGAL ETHICS—Lawyer owes fidelity to the cause of his client— he should be mindful of the trust and confidence in him, remembering always that his actions or omissions are binding on his clients. In this case, the failure of respondent to file the appellant's brief resulted in the dismissal of the appeal. As a consequence, the decision in the trial court finding complainant guilty of homicide became final and executory and he was sentenced to imprisonment. An attorney is bound to protect his client's interest to the best of his ability and with utmost diligence. A failure to file for his client certainly constitutes reasonable negligence on his part. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Mendoza, Second Division, Rabanal v. Tugade, A. C. No. 1372, June 27, 2002] DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

Guillen: The industry is hurting

From page A19

Performers were judged based on 1) naturalnes (sic) and depth of acting; 2) proper timing and clear interaction with other performers; 3) consistency of characterization; 4) logical and effective depiction/projection of the role being portrayed.

For direction, the criteria were: 1) effective execution; 2) appropriate pacing of the story; 3) creative camera works; 4) proper motivation of performers; 5) continuity of over-all production value.

Screenplay was judged on the basis of: 1) creativity and effective interpretation of the story and screenplay; 2) global appeal and competitiveness; 3) local development and consistency of characters and story; 4) originality of style.

Criteria for story were: 1) originality or creative story adaptation; 2) social, cultural and moral relevance and value; 3) global acceptability; 4) logical definition of character; 5) extra-ordinary appeal.

For visual effects, the criteria were: 1) global competitiveness; 2) creative visual execution and original interpretation; 3) appropriateness and consistency; 4) precision of timing of computer graphic.

For editing, criteria were 1) logical, effective or smooth pacing of scenes; 2) consistency of flow of story; 3) creativity; 4) global competitiveness.

If global competitiveness were among the criteria for judging, then how could "Hula Ko, Huli Mo," which was mixed on mono, win over "Agimat Ni Lolo" on Dolby Digital 5.1?

"As Bong Revilla (star of "Agimat") said, he should have won because of this Dolby, *nga*," Malonzo said. "But when we judged for Best Sound Recording, it was not limited to sound effects only. It was everything in the soundtrack—the music, dialogue, effects. When we watched it, the movie was not that great."

Malonzo also stressed that no one could question the theaters where the jurors had screened the entries, saying that they were the same venues in last year's screening.

He agreed that the movies could have been viewed for judging in theaters like Louie's THX and not merely in the decaying New Frontier Theater, whose audio facility is for mono recording.

"But there were no other theaters available," Malonzo said. "We only had New Frontier and LVN. If they want to do that next year, then the producers should shoulder the rent of these high-tech theaters."

So how was the P50-million Malacañang subsidy spent?

Producers of the 9 festival films received P4 million each as part of their incentive, Malonzo said. "So that's already P35 million. The rest was used as incentives for local films. Each month, we gave a local film that was released P100,000 as incentive. I'm sure there's still some money left," he said.

There are also some unanswered questions for Roño and company, and until they find the answers, no one is bound to yell "pack up" to end the furor.

"Let's stick to the issue: how to improve the film festival, what is good for it," Roño said. "It's easy to straighten things if you want to. The simplest line to draw is a straight line. It's following it that's difficult."

Good for the country, bad for politicians

From page A19

the good of the country," said Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, president of the Metro Manila Mayors League. "The President has shown that she is a selfless leader who places the interest of our nation over and above everything."

Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo was succinct.

"Let's respect her decision," he said. "She must have a good reason for it."

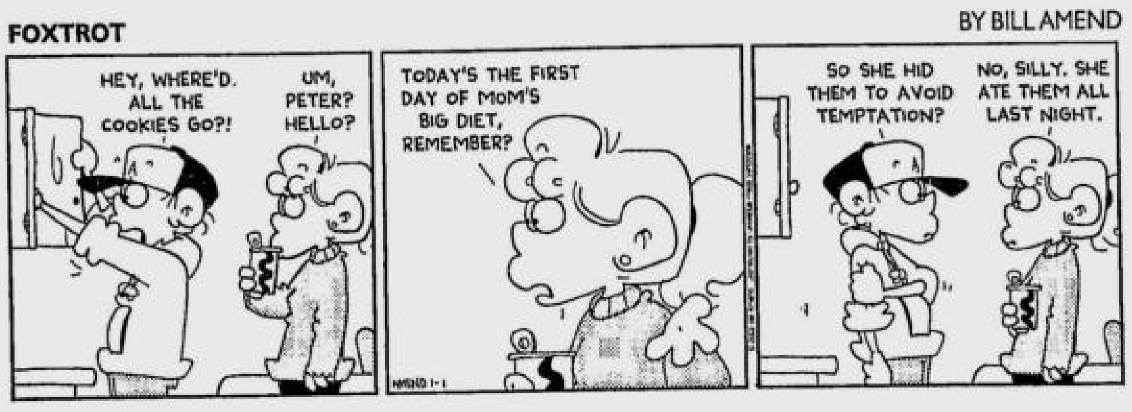
According to Valenzuela City Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo, Lakas, the president's announcement was "a welcome development."

It will remove any suspicion on her part and will instead send out the message of her genuine sincerity toward the poor," Gunigundo said. "Her decision would definitely lead to significant reforms."

"She's very young, she has the best chance of being reelected, but she opted to retire for the sake of the nation," said Caloocan District II Rep. Edgar Erice. "I believe she's sincere with her pronouncement, it's like a point of no return for her. I just hope her sacrifice would not go to waste."

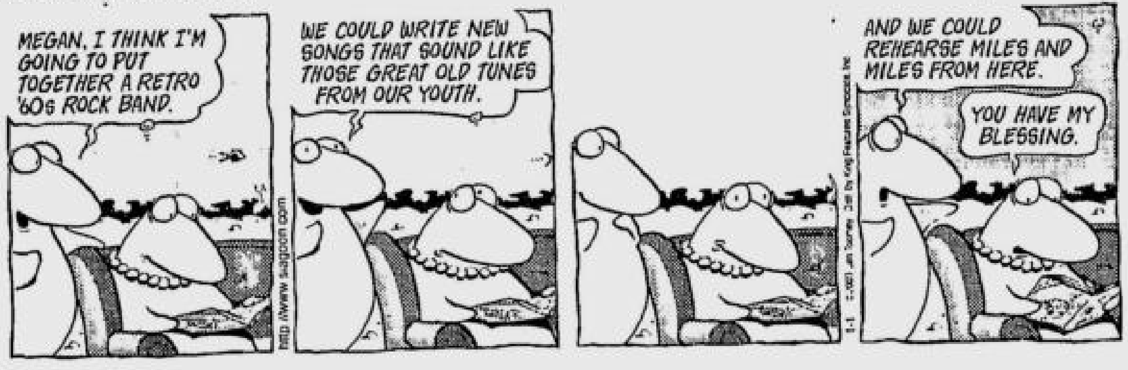
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HEY, WHERE'D ALL THE COOKIES GO?!
UM, PETER? HELLO?
TODAY'S THE FIRST DAY OF MOM'S BIG DIET, REMEMBER?
AMEND 1-1
SO SHE HID THEM TO AVOID TEMPTATION?
NO, SILLY. SHE ATE THEM ALL LAST NIGHT.

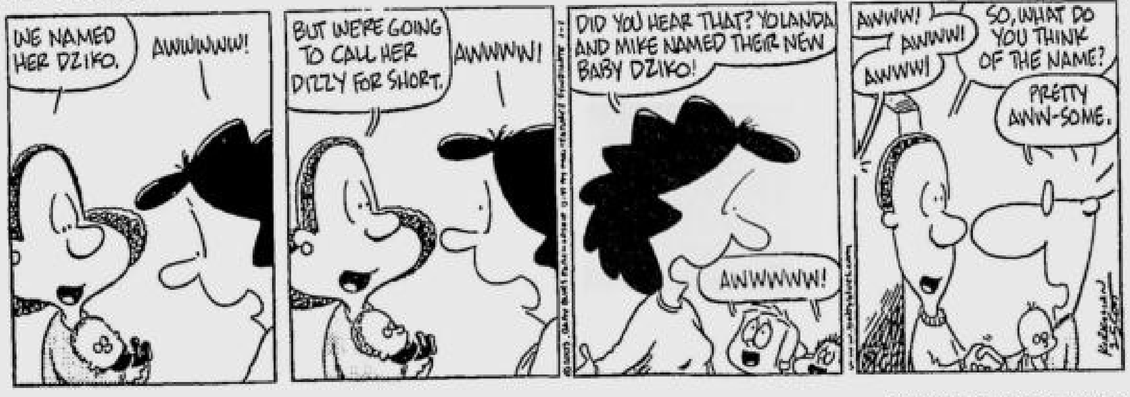
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


MEGAN, I THINK I'M GOING TO PUT TOGETHER A RETRO '60s ROCK BAND.
WE COULD WRITE NEW SONGS THAT SOUND LIKE THOSE GREAT OLD TUNES FROM OUR YOUTH.
AND WE COULD REHEARSE MILES AND MILES FROM HERE.
YOU HAVE MY BLESSING.
http://www.slagoon.com

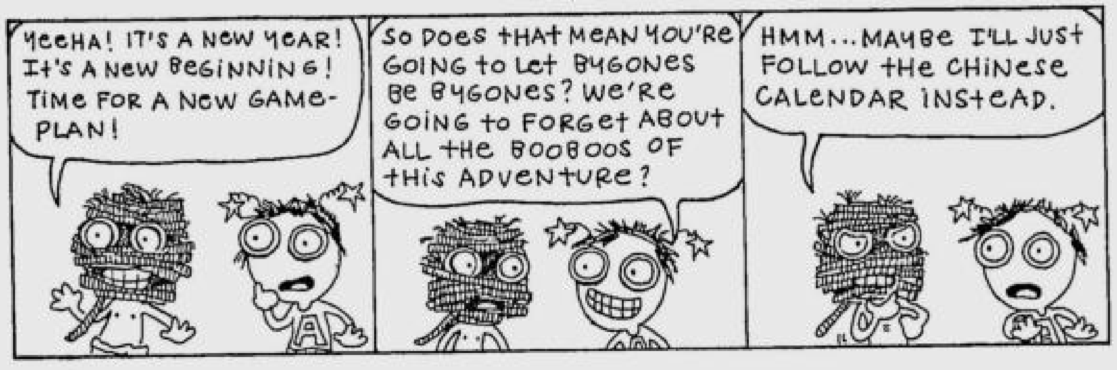
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WE NAMED HER DZIKO.
AWWWWW!
BUT WE'RE GOING TO CALL HER DIZZY FOR SHORT.
AWWWW!
DID YOU HEAR THAT? YOLANDA AND MIKE NAMED THEIR NEW BABY DZIKO!
AWWWWW!
AWWW!
AWWW!
AWWW!
SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NAME?
PRETTY AWW-SOME.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YEEHA! IT'S A NEW YEAR! IT'S A NEW BEGINNING! TIME FOR A NEW GAME-PLAN!
SO DOES THAT MEAN YOU'RE GOING TO LET BYGONES BE BYGONES? WE'RE GOING TO FORGET ABOUT ALL THE BOOBOOS OF THIS ADVENTURE?
HMM... MAYBE I'LL JUST FOLLOW THE CHINESE CALENDAR INSTEAD.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chris Ingersoll, Olivia Ruiz, Xavier Cugat, Barry Goldwater

Happy Birthday: You will have opportunities galore this year, but picking the right one will be your hardest task. Talk to those with experience and find out what your best options are. Don't hold back; get the help you need. Your numbers are 7, 12, 23, 31, 35, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Start the year off on the right foot. Use your creative talent to help you progress. Present your ideas with confidence.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Recognize your past mistakes and make it your mission to do things differently this year. Start off by treating the people around you the way you would like to be treated in return.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Love is mounting, infatuations are manifesting and you will have plenty of choices. If you are in a relationship, heat up the connection; if you're not, check out what your suitors have to offer.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Get involved in family projects and you will be admired for your skills. Someone may be jealous of your talents, but don't let that bother you. Offer your support, guidance and talents.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Say what's on your mind, but be prepared to answer for your actions. You will feel better equipped to move forward once you put the past behind you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Sort out problems that you've carried over from last year. It's important to relive past experiences to ensure that you don't make the same mistakes. You need more stability in your life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You may be tempted to get involved in something that is not above board. Don't start the year out by doing the wrong thing. Hold tight; better opportunities will be heading your way.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't lend money or possessions to others or take on other people's responsibilities. You must do what's best for you. Rest and take it easy today.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Put your ideas and strategies down on paper and make a game plan that will help you achieve your goals this year. Don't let personal matters stop you from pursuing your dreams.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Get peace of mind by contacting the individual who has been upsetting you lately. It's best to get things out in the open. Your future will be put on hold if you don't sort out your personal life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will be in an awkward position if you have let others blame you for something that may not be your fault. Set the record straight, regardless of the consequences. Be strong and take a stance.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't let other people cost you money. Pass on lavish forms of entertainment today. It's high time you started to put yourself first.

Birthday Baby: You will be a strong crusader throughout your life. You will help others and do as much as you can to gain experience. You will be a doer, not a bystander, which will attract friends, enemies and lovers.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 "Star Trek: TNG" android
5 Kidney related
10 Ink smudge
14 Surrounded by
15 Satellite of Jupiter
16 San __, Italy
17 __ Hari
18 Russian leader
19 Admit frankly
20 Groundless indictment
23 "__ the ramparts..."
24 Coll. period
25 Fall mo.
28 Small particle
31 Ransacks
36 Faultless
38 Piccadilly Circus statue
40 "Six O'clock" painter John
41 Groundless indictment
44 Old MacDonald's refrain
45 Nabisco cookie
46 Festive affair
47 Dickens novel, "Little __"
49 Foster film
51 Beatty or Rorem
52 Mayday letters
54 Tic-tac-toe win
56 Groundless indictment
65 Free-for-all
66 Travels by glider
67 Web-site page
68 Singer Brickell
69 Country near Fiji
70 Volcano near Messina
71 Bivouac shelter
72 Iron alloy
73 Train track

DOWN
1 Moist
2 Oriental nanny
3 Bandleader Puente
4 "A Bell for __"
5 Witty conversation
6 Jewish month
7 Part of NLCS
8 Zodiac sign
9 German golfer Bernhard
10 Unruly child
11 First name in denim?
12 Melville novel
13 Mini-city
21 Affirmative vote
22 "Witness" sect
25 Chose
26 Bibelot
27 More accurate
29 Catholic calendar
30 Grieve
32 Ensign
33 Navigational system
34 Two under par
35 Slammin' Sammy
37 Abu Dhabi ruler
39 "Pursuit of the Graf __"
42 Composure
43 Gigantic
48 L'chaim and prosit
50 Mauna __
53 Get a move on!
55 Different one
56 Worry
57 Right-hand man
58 Meat cut
59 Leave text as is
60 Walking stick
61 Encourage
62 Very small amount
63 Dodge model of the '80s
64 "Hud" star Pat

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
17				■	18					■	19			
20				21						22				
■	■	■	23			■	■	24			■	■	■	■
25	26	27	■	28		29	30	■	31		32	33	34	35
36			37	■	38			39	■	40				
41				42					43					
44					■	45				■	46			
47					48	■	49			50	■	51		
■	■	■	■	52		53	■	■	54		55	■	■	■
56	57	58	59				60	61				62	63	64
65				■	66					■	67			
68				■	69					■	70			
71				■	72					■	73			

By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

1/1/03

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

B	L	O	B	■	R	A	L	L	Y	■	T	A	T	A
R	I	P	A	■	O	P	I	U	M	■	I	V	A	N
A	L	E	C	■	G	R	E	T	A	■	T	O	L	D
T	I	C	K	L	E	O	N	E	S	F	A	N	C	Y
■	■	■	W	O	R	N	■	■	U	R	N	■	■	■
M	O	R	A	Y	S	■	A	R	M	Y	■	S	C	I
A	C	U	R	A	■	A	S	E	A	■	S	P	U	N
C	A	N	D	L	E	S	T	I	C	K	P	A	R	K
A	L	E	S	■	V	I	E	D	■	R	A	I	S	E
W	A	S	■	W	E	A	R	■	W	A	R	N	E	D
■	■	■	C	O	N	■	■	C	A	F	E	■	■	■
H	I	D	D	E	N	B	A	L	L	T	R	I	C	K
O	D	O	R	■	E	R	R	O	L	■	I	C	O	N
E	L	M	O	■	S	E	N	S	E	■	B	E	T	E
S	E	E	M	■	S	W	E	E	T	■	S	T	E	W

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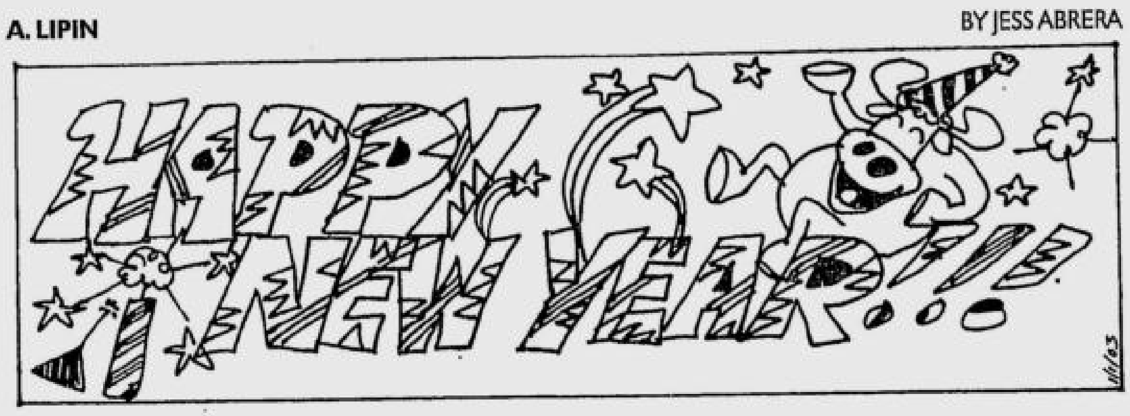
1/1/03

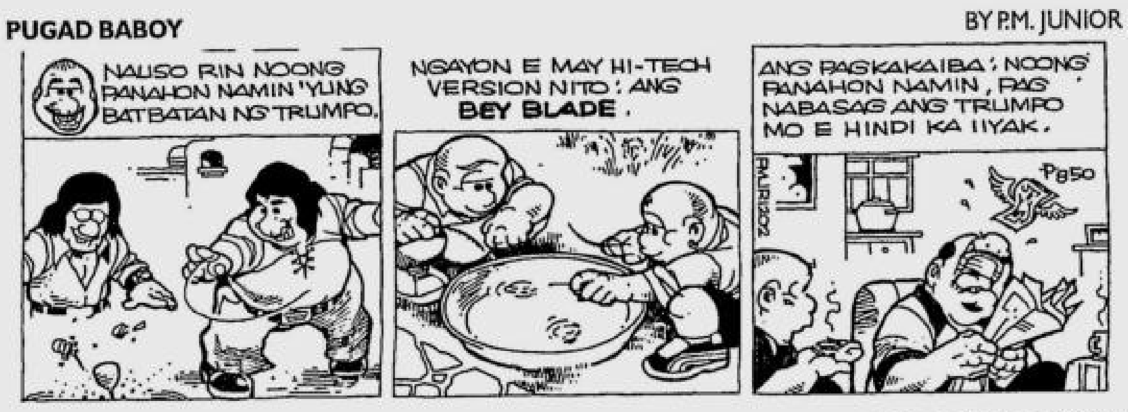
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
1/1/03

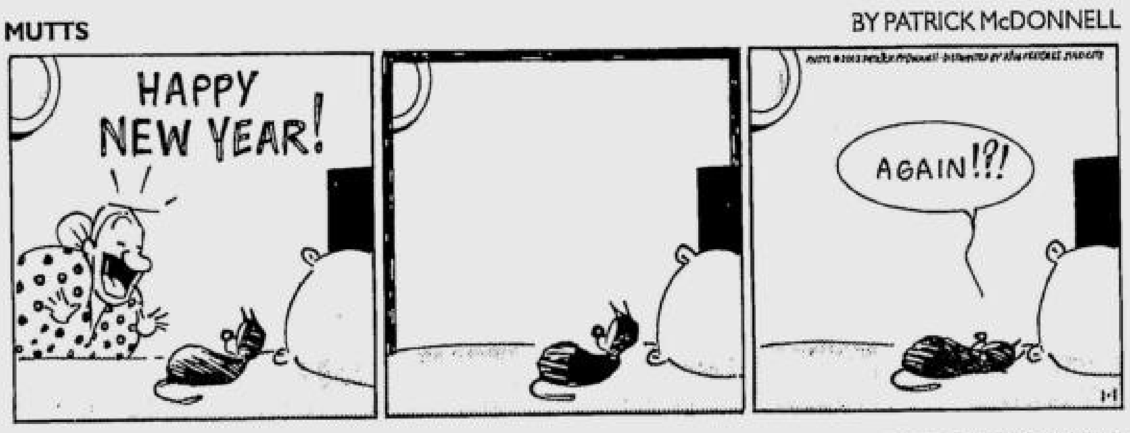
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAUSO RIN NOONG PANAHON NAMIN 'YUNG BATBATAN NG TRUMPO.
NGAYON E MAY HI-TECH VERSION NITO: ANG BEY BLADE.
ANG PAGKAKAIBA: NOONG PANAHON NAMIN, PAG NABASAG ANG TRUMPO MO E HINDI KA IIYAK.
P850

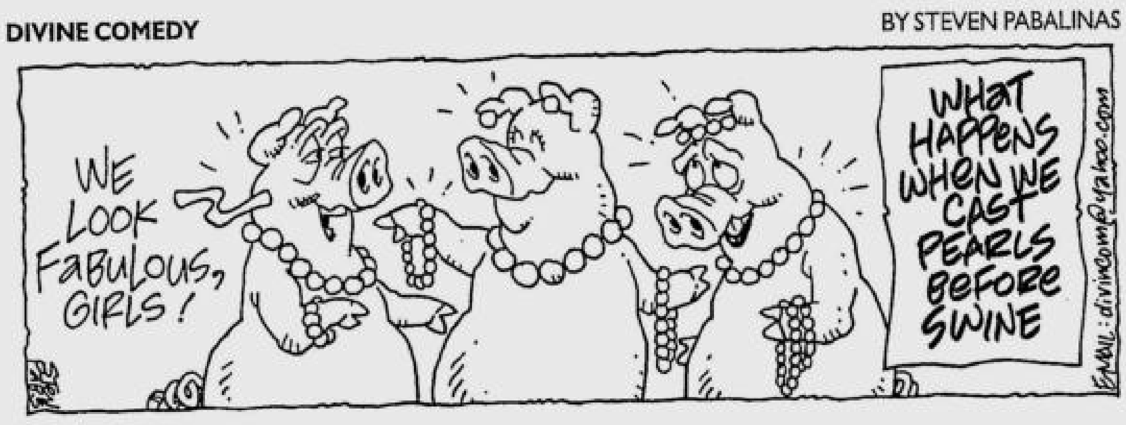
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HAPPY NEW YEAR!
AGAIN!?!
1-1

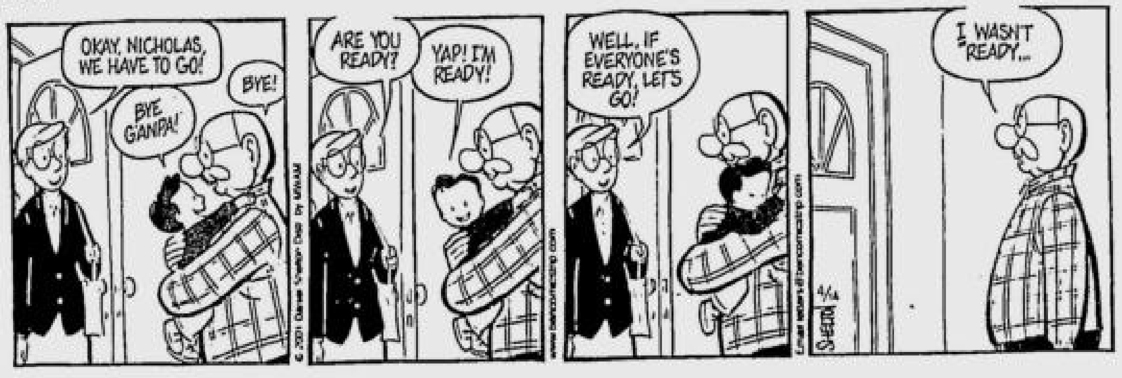
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WE LOOK FABULOUS, GIRLS!
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE CAST PEARLS BEFORE SWINE
EMAIL: divinecomp@yahoo.com

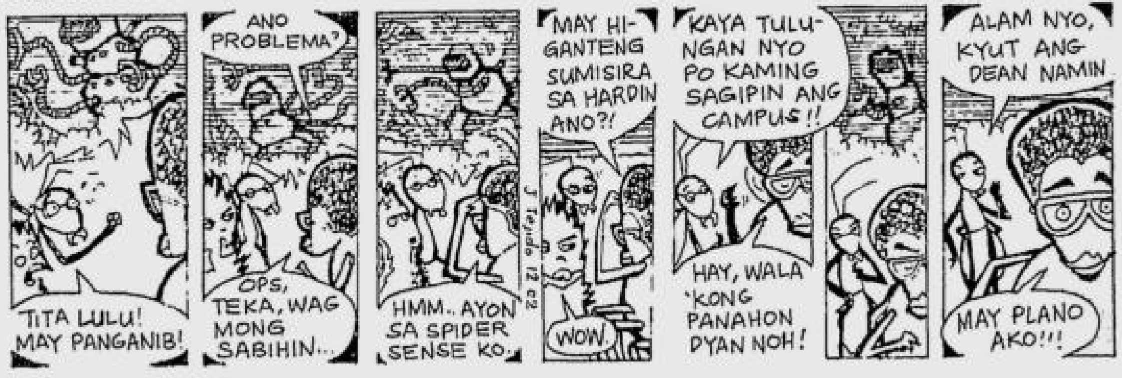
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


OKAY, NICHOLAS, WE HAVE TO GO!
BYE GANPA!
BYE!
ARE YOU READY?
YAP! I'M READY!
WELL, IF EVERYONE'S READY, LET'S GO!
I WASN'T READY...

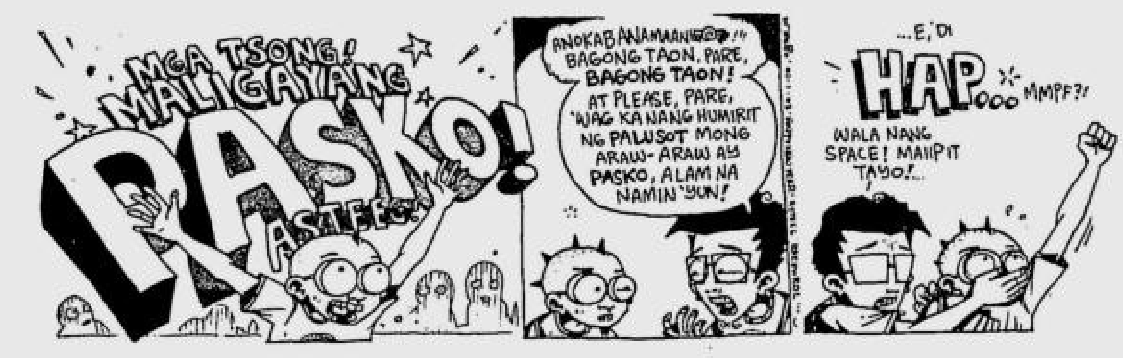
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


TITA LULU! MAY PANGANIB!
ANO PROBLEMA?
OPS, TEKA, WAG MONG SABIHIN...
HMM.. AYON SA SPIDER SENSE KO.
MAY HIGANTENG SUMISIRA SA HARDIN ANO?!
WOW.
KAYA TULUNGAN NYO PO KAMING SAGIPIN ANG CAMPUS!!
HAY, WALA 'KONG PANAHON DYAN NOH!
ALAM NYO, KYUT ANG DEAN NAMIN
MAY PLANO AKO!!!
J Tejido 12 02

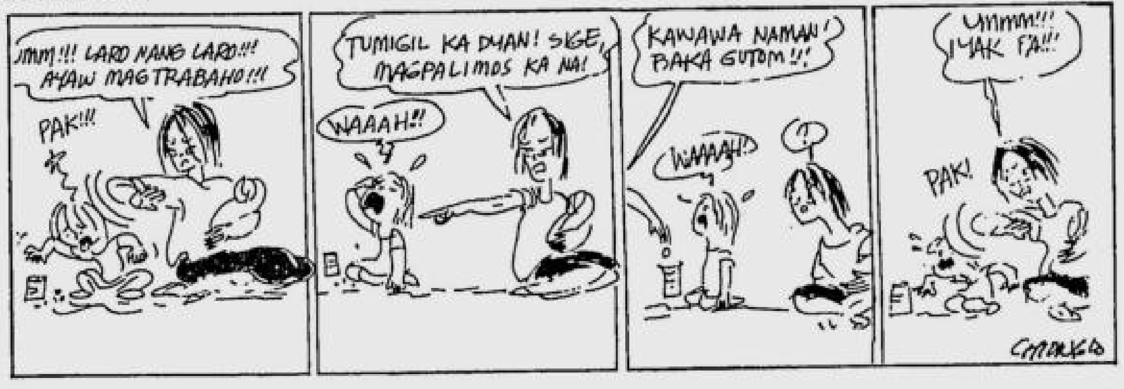
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MGA TSONG! MALIGAYANG PASKO!
ASTEEG!
ANOKABANAMAAN!!!
BAGONG TAON, PARE, BAGONG TAON! AT PLEASE, PARE, 'WAG KA NANG HUMIRIT NG PALUSOT MONG ARAW-ARAW AY PASKO, ALAM NA NAMIN 'YUN!
...E, DI HAP...
MMPF?!
WALA NANG SPACE! MAIIPIT TAYO!...

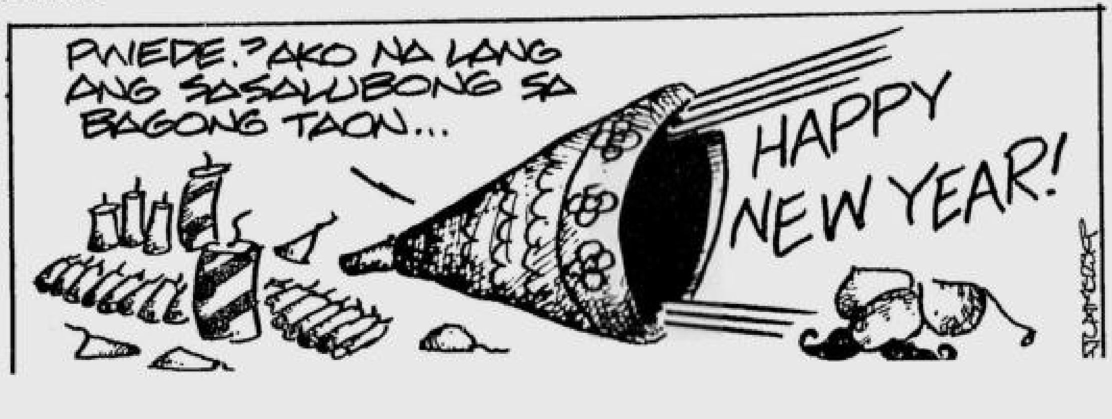
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


UMM!!! LARO NANG LARO!!! AYAW MAGTRABAHO!!!
PAK!!!
TUMIGIL KA DYAN! SIGE, MAGPALIMOS KA NA!
WAAAH!!
KAWAWA NAMAN! BAKA GUTOM!!!
WAAAH!!
?
UMMM!!! IYAK PA!!!
PAK!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PWEDE, AKO NA LANG ANG SASALUBONG SA BAGONG TAON...
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

For sreening times, call 729-7777.
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1

1	DEKADA '70
2	LASTIKMAN
3	ANG AGIMAT
4	MANO PO

G4 GLORIETTA 4

1	ANG AGIMAT
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	DEKADA '70
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
5	ANG ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6	MANO PO
7	HULA MO... HULI KO!

GB1 GREENBELT 1

1	LASTIKMAN
2	MANO PO
	Onstage

GB3 GREENBELT 3

1	DEKADA '70
2	MANO PO
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4	ANG AGIMAT
	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	DEKADA '70
2	AGIMAT
3	MANO PO
4	LASTIKMAN
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333.
Or log on to www.sureseats.com

*GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	MANO PO
2 (SDDS)	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 GOLD (DTS ES)	LAPU LAPU
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	HULA MO HULI KO
6 GOLD (SDDS)	DEKADA '70
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LAPU LAPU
8	HULA MO HULI KO
9	DEKADA '70
10	HOME ALONG D RIVER

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	LAPU LAPU
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	DEKADA '70
5	AGIMAT
6 (DTS)	HULA MO HULI KO
Golden Pearl THX	MANO PO

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LAPU LAPU
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	HULA MO HULI KO

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	HULA MO HULI KO
2	DEKADA '70
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	HOME ALONG
5	LAPU LAPU

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	LAPU LAPU
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	DEKADA '70
5	AGIMAT
6	MANO PO

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13

RESERVE

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	DEKADA '70
2	AGIMAT

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HOME ALONG D RIVER
2	AGIMAT
3	HULA MO HULI KO
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	MANO PO
4	HULA MO HULI KO
5	AGIMAT
6	DEKADA '70
7 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
8 (SDDS)	HOME ALONG
9 (DOLBY)	LAPU LAPU

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	AGIMAT
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (SDDS)	DEKADA '70
5	LAPU LAPU
6 (DOLBY)	HULA MO HULI KO
7 (DTS)	MANO PO
8	HOME ALONG D RIVER
9	LAPU LAPU

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	MANO PO
2 (SDDS)	AGIMAT
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DOLBY)	DEKADA '70
5	LAPU LAPU

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	HULA MO HULI KO
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	HOME ALONG D RIVER
4	LAPU LAPU
5 (SDDS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	HULA MO HULI KO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Lords	LAPU LAPU
Jennet	MANO PO

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3	HOME ALONG D RIVER
4	LAPU LAPU

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LAPU LAPU
2	MANO PO
3	AGIMAT
4	DEKADA '70
5	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	MANO PO
2	HULA MO HULI KO

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	MANO PO
2	HOME ALONG D RIVER

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta center

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821,8242/8400

1	DEKADA '70
2	LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO LOLA
4 (SDDS)	AGIMAT
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS: THE SHORT CUT
6	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	LASTIKMAN
2	AGIMAT

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	LAPU LAPU
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	HULA MO HULI KO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	HOME ALONG D RIVER
2 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
4	MANO PO

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	MANO PO
2 (DOLBY)	HULA MO HULI KO
3 (DTS)	DEKADA'70
4	HOME ALONG D RIVER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	HOME ALONG D RIVER
2	MANO PO
3 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	HOME ALONG D RIVER
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT
4 (DTS)	MANO PO

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	DEKADA '70
2 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	MANO PO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	HOME ALONG D RIVER
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	HULA MO HULI KO
4	MANO PO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DEKADA '70
2	HULA MO HULI KO
3 (DTS)	MANO PO
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
5	LAPU LAPU

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	LAPU LAPU
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	AGIMAT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	AGIMAT
3	MANO PO

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	MANO PO
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DOLBY)	AGIMAT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2 (DTS)	HULA MO HULI KO

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	AGIMAT
3	LAPU LAPU

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	AGIMAT
2	DEKADA '70
3	MANO PO
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3 (DTS ES)	DEKADA '70
4	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

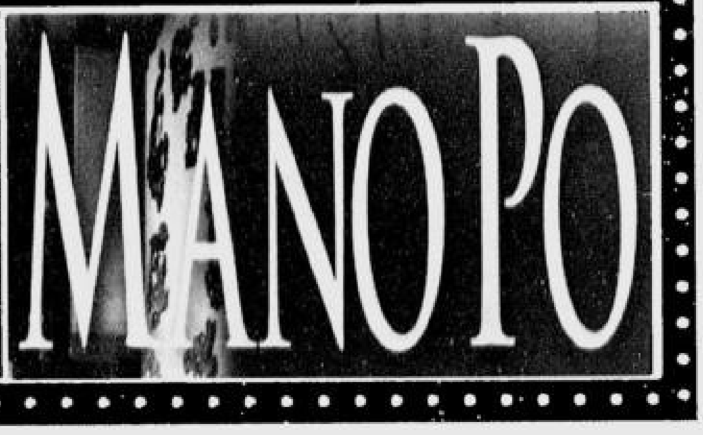
Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	MANO PO
2	DEKADA '70
3 (DOLBY)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DTS)	AGIMAT

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72



SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173888

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4	MANO PO
5	AGIMAT
6	LASTIKMAN
7	DEKADA '70
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	AGIMAT
6	HULA MO, HULI KO
7	LASTIKMAN
8	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
9	LASTIKMAN
10	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
4	AGIMAT
5	DEKADA '70
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
9	MANO PO
10	LAPU LAPU
11	AGIMAT
12	LASTIKMAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	MANO PO
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	AGIMAT
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
8	LAPU LAPO
9	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
10	HULA MO, HULI KO
11	MANO PO
12	LASTIKMAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331801 • 6329401

1	MANO PO
2	DEKADA '70
3	LASTIKMAN
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS
5	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
6	LAPU LAPU
7	LASTIKMAN
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	MANO PO
10	AGIMAT
11	HULA MO, HULI KO
12	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	HULA MO, HULI KO
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	DEKADA '70
5	MANO PO
6	LASTIKMAN
7	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8	AGIMAT

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
2	DEKADA '70
3	AGIMAT
4	LASTIKMAN
5	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6	LASTIKMAN
7	MANO PO
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9	HULA MO, HULI KO
10	ALAMAT NG LAWIN

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	MANO PO
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	AGIMAT
8	MANO PO

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	DEKADA '70
2	CLOSED
3	AGIMAT
4	MANO PO
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7	CLOSED
8	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	AGIMAT
2	MANO PO
3	LASTIKMAN
4	DEKADA '70
5	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO
3	AGIMAT
4	LASTIKMAN

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO
4	AGIMAT

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	MANO PO
4	DEKADA '70
5	LASTIKMAN
6	AGIMAT

SM BICUTAN

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS
2	MANO PO
3	DEKADA '70
4	AGIMAT

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1	AGIMAT
2	DEKADA '70
3	MANO PO
4	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

1	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2 1:00 FS/1:30 MF/3:40/5:50/8:00/ 9:40 LFS/10:10 LMF/11:50 END
2	MANO PO 12:00 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/ 10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:15 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS @ Robinsons Malls

call-a-movie: 536- 7812

NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632- 9115- 16 633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	MANO PO
2	LASTIKMAN
3	MANO PO
4	AGIMAT
5	SPIRIT WARRIOR
6	DEKADA '70
7	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
8	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
9	DEKADA '70
10	HULA MO HULI KO

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema / P65 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1	MANO PO
2	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
3	DEKADA '70
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS
5	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
6	ANG AGIMAT
7	LASTIKMAN

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	AGIMAT
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	LASTIKMAN
4	DEKADA '70
5	HULA MO HULI KO
6	MANO PO
7	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1	AGIMAT
2	DEKADA '70
3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4	HULA MO HULI KO
5	MANO PO
6	LASTIKMAN
7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
8	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Malabon Citisquare 288-0985 / 288-2575

1	MANO PO
2	LASTIKMAN
3	AGIMAT
4	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927 961- 5318 / 5270

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO
3	DEKADA '70
4	AGIMAT
5	LASTIKMAN
6	SPIRIT WARRIORS

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	MANO PO
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	LASTIKMAN
5	DEKADA '70
6	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

Sta. Rosa Laguna

1	LASTIKMAN
2	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	AGIMAT
5	MANO PO

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1	LIKE MIKE
2	DEKADA 70
3	LASTIKMAN
4	MANO PO
5	SPIRIT WARRIOR
6	AGIMAT

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1	AGIMAT
2	LASTIKMAN
3	SPIRIT WARRIORS
4	DEKADA '70
5	HOME ALONG THE RIBER
6	MANO PO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Vic Sotto the brains behind new version of 'Lastikman'

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

HAPPY New Year to every one!

The two other entries to this year's Metro Manila Film Festival —"Lastikman" and "Spirit Warriors 2: Shortcut"—will get their share of box office revenues starting today, when the films start their regular theater run.

After MMFF executive committee chair and Caloocan City Mayor **Rey Malonzo** ironed out the controversy in the selection of entries, "Lastikman" and "Spirit Warriors 2" were included in the list, with a Jan. 1 screening.

The lead star of "Lastikman," **Vic Sotto**, has been a certified crowd-drawer at the tills. Proof of this are his many comedy starrers in the past, which have been huge blockbusters.

Aside from his comic talent, Vic also has the good looks and charm which make girls easily swoon to him. Three of my girl friends—**Shirley Pizarro, Ivy Mendoza** and **Susan de Guzman**—have been self-confessed Vic Sotto fans for a long time now. For a long time, I know Susan even kept an autographed colored photo of Vic in her wallet.

JAVIER. To do a Valentine dance concert at the Folk Arts Theater.

My sister, **Lois**, also adores Vic and said that she would queue at the theaters for "Lastikman," to see the comedian play a Pinoy superhero.

My sister-in-law, **Lisa Gatdula**, has been working for Vic's M-Zet TV Productions for over a decade now, and she only has superlatives to say about her generous and handsome "Bosing."

Although he's known as a ladies' man, the forty-something Vic has maintained his eminent status in local show biz. Credit that to his illustrious family background, his many credentials in films, TV and even in music, and his longevity in the business.

Of course, viewers are familiar with Vic through the long-running noontime show, "Eat Bulaga," on GMA 7. But even with his daily exposure on TV and his Sunday night sitcom, "Dadedidodoo," also on GMA 7, Vic remains a bankable comedian at the box office.

Vic, however, makes very few movies these days, unlike during the heyday of the popular triumvirate of **Tito**, Vic and **Joey** (with his brother, Sen. **Tito Sotto III** and **Joey de Leon**). His last film was in 2000, "Bakit Ba Ganyan," a screen reunion with his former wife, **Dina Bonnevie**. So when Vic chooses his film projects, he makes it a point to deliver only wholesome laughs.

"Lastikman" is one such flick that is within the mold of Vic's kind of comedy.

The trailer of "Lastikman" is very appealing, especially to kids, who see a Spiderman-like hero out to wipe out the bad guys.

"If the kids like Batman, Superman and Spiderman, they will also enjoy Lastikman, who has his own superpowers," Vic says of his screen character.

But Vic is not just the star of "Lastikman." He is the brains behind bringing the komiks superhero back to the big screen. With his M-Zet Productions, he also bankrolled the comedy flick with **Orly Ilacad**'s OctoArts Films.

"Lastikman" was based on the popular and well-loved komiks character by the late **Mars Ravelo**, who also created such Pinoy superheroes as Darna, Captain Barbel and Dyesebel.

Actor **Von Serna** played the original "Lastikman" in the 1958 movie.

"Orly and I talked about the possibility of doing a new film version of 'Lastikman,' but this time, we said it will be heavy on special effects," Vic shares.

"We updated the story, with big action sequences and a lot of special effects. We also injected a lot of funny situations."

The producers did not scrimp on production to come out with a big-budget movie, completed with a whopping cost of P35 million.

"We like to make this movie appealing to kids and adults as well," says Vic. "We really spent for this and we all worked hard for it. We didn't want to sacrifice the film's quality or shortchange the audience."

Another come-on of "Lastikman" is Vic's first time to work with his son, Oyo Boy, in a full-length movie.

Oyo Boy first joined his dad on the big screen by doing a mere guest role in "Crocodile Jones," a comedy-adventure spoof of the famous Hollywood flick, "Indiana Jones."

It has taken years for Oyo Boy to make another movie again, but the young Sotto cannot be thankful enough that he was offered to be in the cast of "Lastikman."

In the movie, Oyo Boy plays the young Hilario, who accidentally gains the power of elasticity when a meteor hits a rubber tree and he gets covered with its sap.

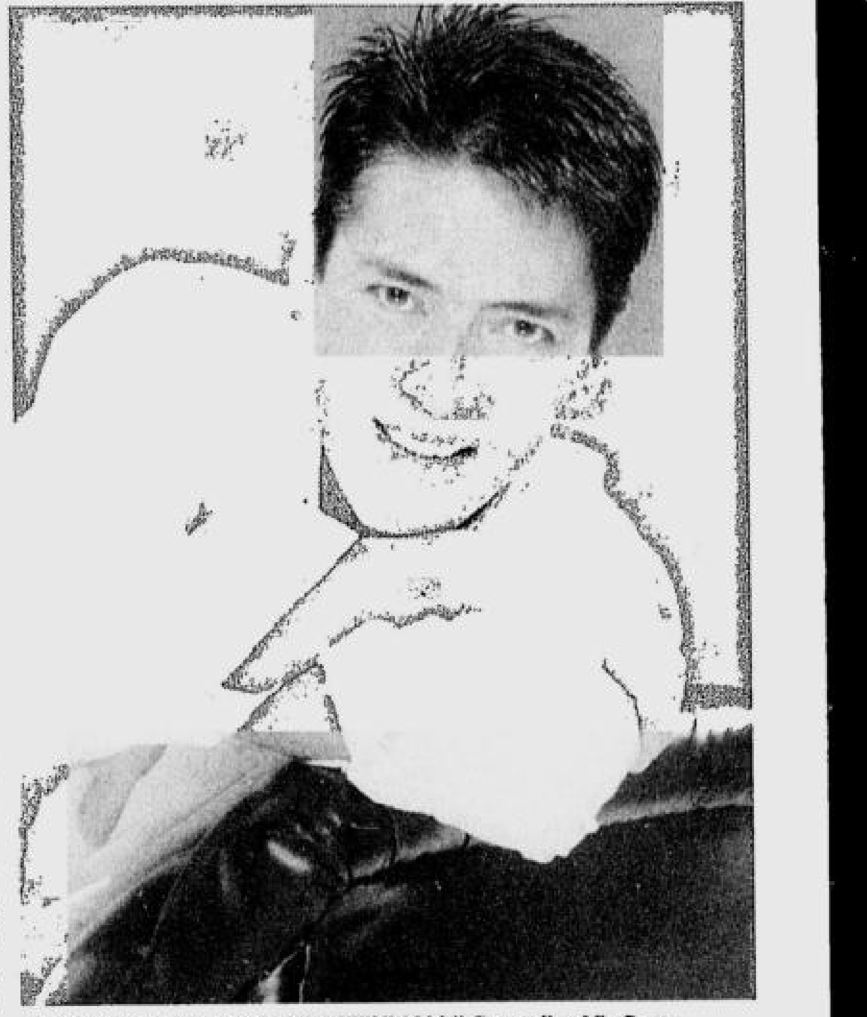
Vic, meanwhile, is the adult Hilario who turns into Professor Larry, the nemesis of Stryker (**Jeffrey Quizon**).

For Oyo Boy, doing "Lastikman" was more fun than work.

"There was never a dull moment on the set because everyone is excited with the movie," Oyo Boy says. "Since it is my first movie, *kailangan ko rin magpakitang-gilas*. I don't want to turn down my dad's request. He's my idol and I'm happy to be in this big movie."

Vic is glad that his son accepted the offer to star with him in "Lastikman." He is aware that Oyo Boy is not too inclined toward show biz. The teenage boy is more into his schooling rather than being an actor.

"I simply asked him if he wants to be in my movie and he said yes right away. He didn't turn me down," Vic says.



BIGGEST COME-ON OF "LASTIKMAN." Comedian Vic Sotto with his good looks, charm and strong box office appeal.

New production outfit

THE NEW Year welcomes a new multi-media production outfit, Prelude Entertainment and Productions Company Inc., established to mount films, TV shows, concerts and musical events that will entertain a diverse audience.

Founded and created by artist and entrepreneur **David Lao**, Prelude Entertainment was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in September last year.

The company debuted in concert production with the one-woman show of **Ai-Ai de las Alas**, "Whattawoman," last Dec. 7 at Le Pavillon in Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

Prelude Entertainment, however, vows to be more active in mounting entertainment events this year. Lao points out the outfit's concept of producing shows that are "low in commercialism and high in artistic value," will be reflected in all aspects of their concerts, films and other media events.

Prelude Entertainment's razor sharp focus is to showcase live musical performances, with both local and foreign artists in big concert venues. The company gathers the most prolific minds in the entertainment industry whose expertise is directed toward creating concerts and events.

A forthcoming big event to be produced by Prelude Entertainment is the Valentine dance concert of **Patricia Javier** at the Folk Arts Theater.

Backroom artists look forward to a busier 2003

MILLADO. New career moves.

OCHOA. More challenging roles.

A YEAR full of expectations and hope is how Backroom artists see the year 2003. While the general sentiment in show biz is on the wait-and-see attitude of what may come, Backroom artists are optimistic the New Year would bring glad tidings for everyone.

Comedienne Ai-Ai de las Alas, whose career rose to new heights with standing-room-only concerts, an array of TV shows and a movie in the making, says that 2002 was "well spent and one that was full of blessings."

For this year, the comedy concert queen hopes for more movies to come and a major concert for her fans.

Ai-Ai skipped her yearly major concert to give way to the shooting of her solo starter under Star Cinema, "Tanging Ina," and a series of successful performances in the United States.

Calvin Millado earned critical acclaim when he appeared as the transvestite Frank N' Furter in "The Rocky Horror Show." That big leap in Calvin's career as an artist makes him think of new career moves this year.

"Last year has been fulfilling," Calvin says. "I have great expectations this year. I am optimistic about some career moves."

With an Awit Award to boot, Gladys and the Boxers with K braces the year with a renewed strength to be at par with the public's expectations as a comedy-musical group.

"The award meant a big thing for us," says Gladys. "The public took us seriously. It's not easy to make people laugh and sing for them at the same time. We hope for more blessings next year."

Dessa admits the past year was hard for singers when it comes to live performances. Still, she was lucky enough to have shows here and abroad.

"The best that happened to me last year was when I won the Aliw and Katha awards," Dessa says: "For this year, I hope there will be more shows for everyone."

One of the most visible and sought-after stars last year, Rufa Mae Quinto intimates that God has been very kind to her.

"The year 2002 was full of blessings for me," Rufa Mae says. "I wish this year will be the same. Even if I don't have a love life, I'm happy. I also hope the movie industry will improve more for all of us."

Dominic Ochoa, who shifted from his boy-next-door roles to an off-beat portrayal of a double-faced Christian in "Jologs" and another challenging role in "Nine Mornings," is expecting roles of the same kind this year.

After the box office hits "Two Timer" and "Mano Po" (for which she won the Metro Manila Film Festival 2002 best actress award), Ara Mina dreams of more dramatic roles to come her way.

"I want to do more dramatic roles again," she says. "I also want to concentrate on my singing. I am looking forward to a follow up of my first album."

There is no stopping Ima Castro who plays Kim in the London production of "Miss Saigon."

Ima misses home, but "Miss Saigon" is one opportunity she could not pass up.

Ima says "Miss Saigon" is an international exposure not just for her but for the Filipino artist as well.

MTV VJ Belinda Panelo is doing her best to put to good use the acting courses she took at the New York Film Academy. She did remarkable portrayals in the TV soap series "Sa Puso Ko Iingatan Ka" and in the movie "Nine Mornings." She also earned good reviews in "Vagina Monologues."

Verni Varga sings corporate blues away as she has always done.

"Everybody had his own share of sacrifice," Verni asserts. "I had my own little contributions *din*. I think the local music industry needs new blood and a new face. There is so much influx of new music, new singers, but my fervent wish is for these things to last. That's the legacy of being a musician, a performer, for the people to listen to your music constantly."

For the vocal sextet The Company, 2002 was a landmark year. It was one of the best years the group has had in its 17 years.

"We know we are off to a good start this year when our song, 'Baka Ikaw' from the 'Storybook' album became a certified hit," says Moy Ortiz.

The past year was also a year of traveling for the group.

The Company went back to Guam for a successful show with Aiza Seguerra. They also performed twice in Singapore within a year—first was their Valentine show at the Raffles Hotel and the next was to participate in the International A Cappella Festival.

ARA MINA. Drama and singing.

Their biggest achievement last year was when they filled up the main theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines last June 25. The show was documented as a TV special and soon-to-be-released live album.

The group's blessed streak continued when they won their 23rd Awit Award last year.

"Even though the year posed many challenges and hard work for the group, persistence and focus on one's vision paid off in the end," Moy says.

"We are hoping that 2003 will be kind to the group, as well. It is one of our dreams to bring our concert act to the US mainland. This is one of the things we will work for this year. Hopefully, God will allow it."

A brand new album from BMG Records is what Ariel Rivera expects to happen this year.

Ariel has churned out hits like "Sana Kahit Minsan," "Minsan Lang Kita Iibigin," "Ayoko na Sana," "Photographs," "Getting to Know Each Other" and "Smile In Your Heart."

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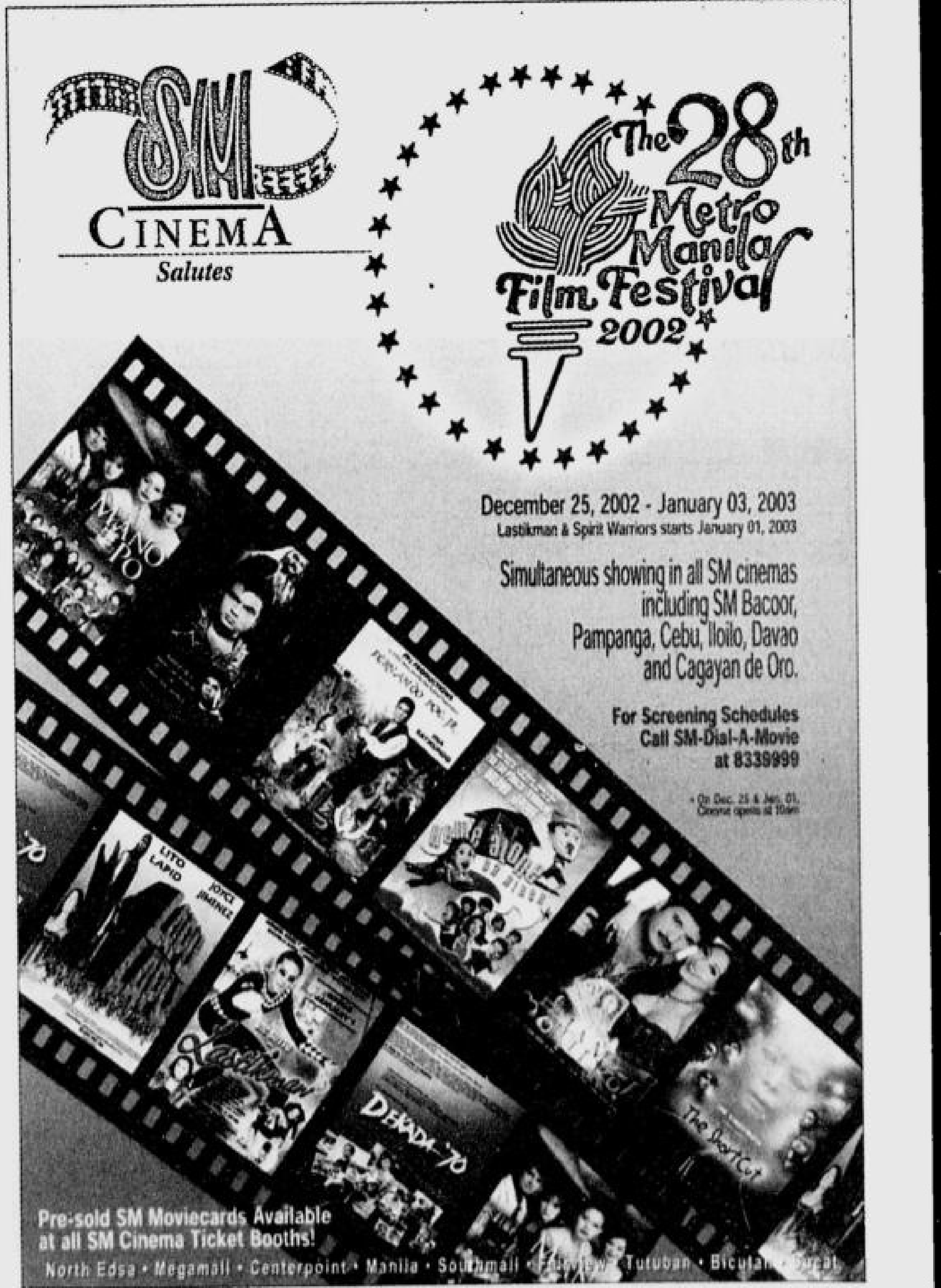

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Big productions for the new film year

From page A25

sniper rifle. Farrell must use the phone to save his life, or else risk the possibly fatal consequences of leaving the booth.

"One Hour Photo." In a radical shift from his past starrers, **Robin Williams** plays a lonely and tortured character—the manager of the photo-printing department of a large store.

He looks harmless, but it turns out that he harbors a secret fantasy: to be a part of a family not his own. Eventually, fantasy begins to blur with reality and the family's safety is threatened.

And "Daredevil" stars **Ben Affleck** as a blind crimefighter! After training hard in martial arts and excelling in law school, he becomes a lawyer by day and a vigilante by night.

Comeback for musicals

WHEN "Moulin Rouge" clicked with viewers, fans of musical films hoped that its success would make musicals popular again on the big screen. That hasn't happened yet, but more producers are now bankrolling musical productions, and if enough of them turn out to be hits, musicals could make a big comeback this year.

All eyes are on the film version of the broadway hit, "Chicago." Many film buffs want to see it because it showcases, for the first time, the singing and dancing talents of **Catherine Zeta-Jones** and **Renee Zellweger**.

Movie musicals were very popular in the '50s and '60s, but lost favor in the more "realistic" decades that followed. That was a great pity, because they comprise an important film genre. Let's hope that "Chicago" is as successful as "Moulin Rouge," so movie musicals will be here to stay!

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	DEKADA '70
Ali 2	LASTIKMAN
Ali 3	MANO PO LOLA
Ali 4	AGIMAT
Ali 5	SPIRIT WARRIORS: THE SHORT CUT
Ali 6	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
Ali 7	HOME ALONE DA RIBER

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	LASTIKMAN
Farmers 2	AGIMAT

ARANETA COLISEUM	
DEC. 30-JAN 1-4	JOY TO THE WORLD CONCERT
JAN 11	ANAK LAUNCH
JAN 20,22 & 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003

ELEPHANT WORLD	
DEC. 30	1 PM / 3 PM / 5 PM
DEC. 31	1 PM / 3 PM / 5 PM
JAN 01	1 PM / 3 PM / 5 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MASIKIP MAINIT / LA FEMME EROTIQUE
ODEON	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
ODEON-2	VENUS / BUBOT
ROBEN	BIBINGKA
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	RAIN OF FIRE / UNFAITHFUL
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	AGIMAT NG LAWIN
QUEZON-1	BIBINGKA
REMAR	ITLOG
REMAR-2	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-2	REPLI-KATE
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	LAPU LAPU
CINEMA-2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DEKADA 70
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-6	MANO PO
CINEMA-7	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-8	HULA MO, HULI KO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-12	HULA MO, HULI KO
CINEMA-14	LAPU LAPU
CINEMA-15	DEKADA 70
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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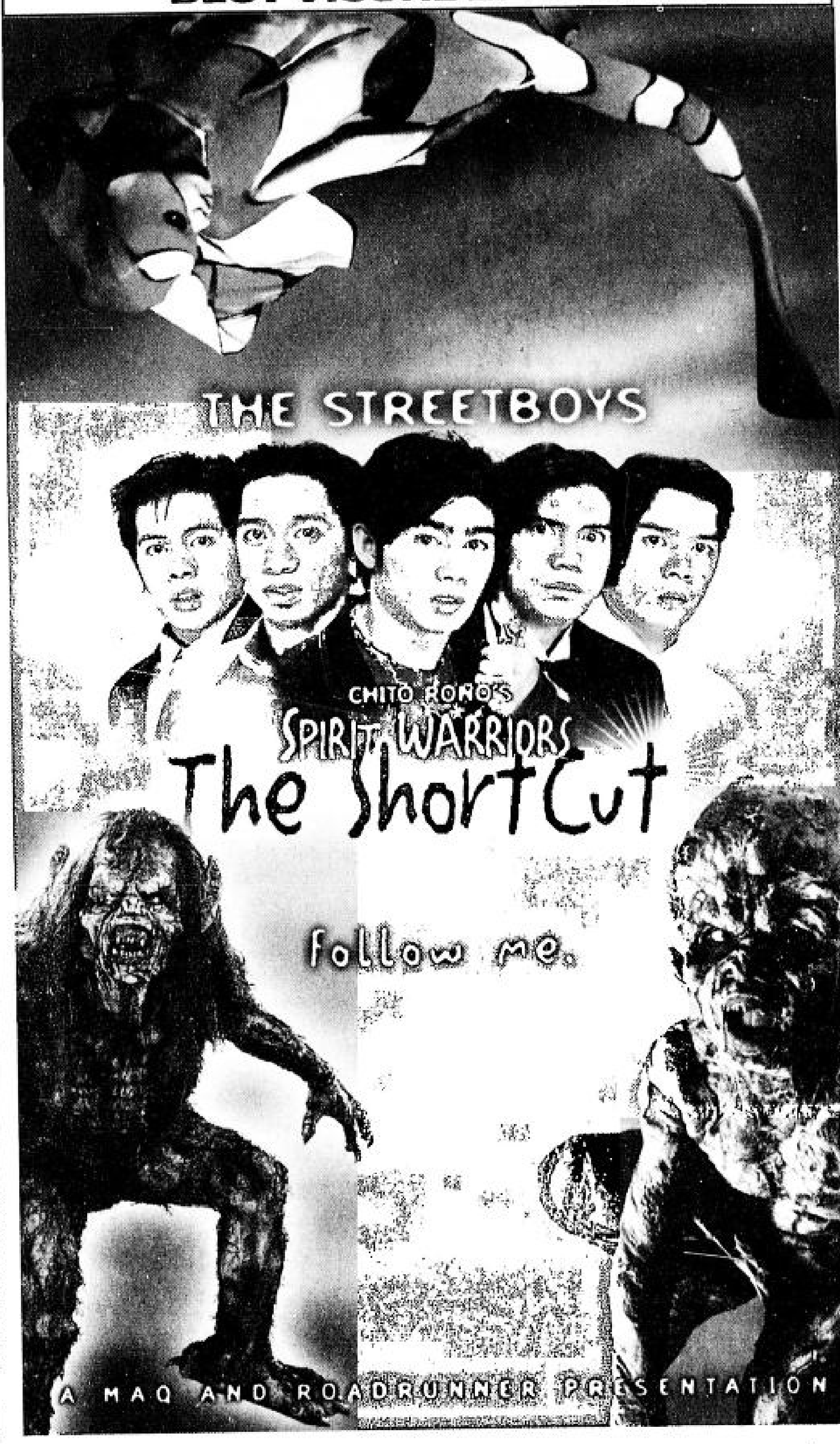

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AGIMAT NI LOLO GP 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	LASTIKMAN GP	MANO PO GP 1:35,4:30,7:25,10:20

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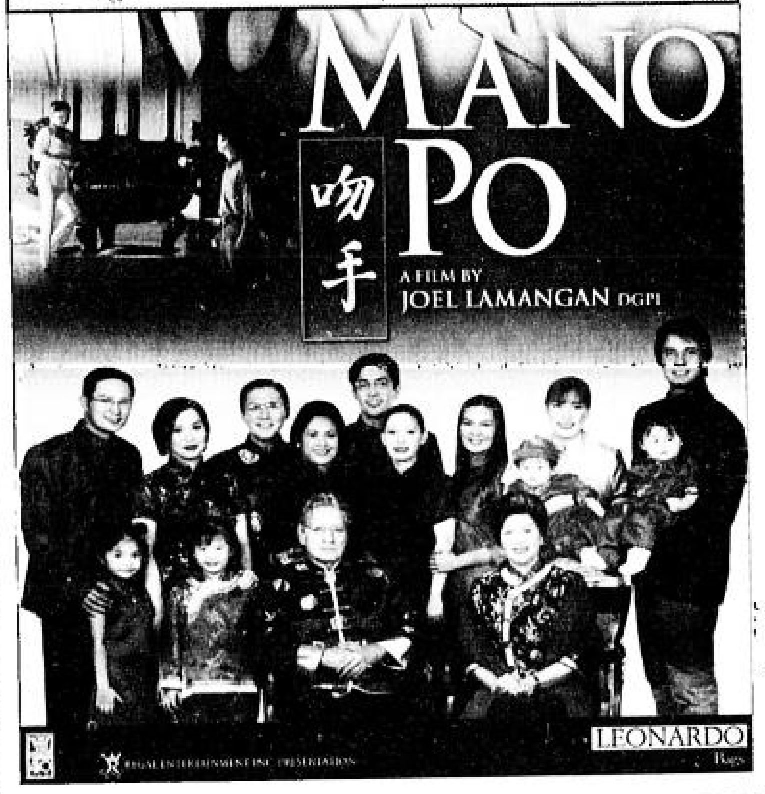
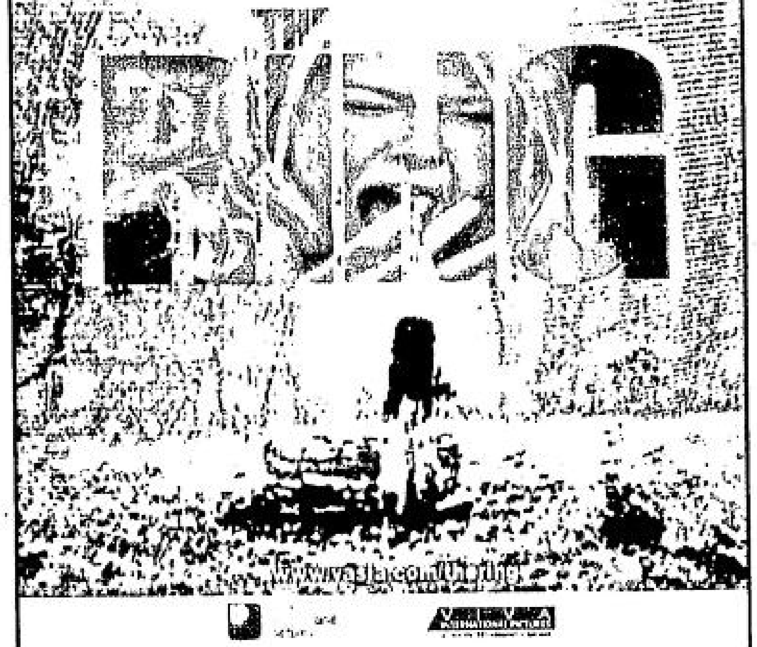
BEST ACTOR
BEST ACTRESS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
BEST DIRECTOR
BEST SCREENPLAY
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
BEST EDITING
BEST MUSICAL SCORE
BEST PRODUCTION [illegible]



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
Parents are strongly cautioned not to bring children below 13 years old to watch this movie.
"THE BEST SCARY MOVIE SINCE 'THE SIXTH SENSE'... 'THE RING' WILL HAUNT YOU."
SUSAN GRANGER, SSG SYNDICATE
"NOT SINCE 'THE EXORCIST' OR 'ROSEMARY'S BABY' HAS A MOVIE BEEN SO TRULY FRIGHTENING."
PAT COLLINS, WWOR
"'THE RING' RAISES SOME SERIOUS GOOSE BUMPS."
DAVID ANSEN, NEWSWEEK



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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Big productions for the new film year

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE GLOBAL economy may be in the doldrums, but the US movie business keeps getting better and better. Some countries' movie industries are hurting, but overall, the financial picture remains bright.

Especially Hollywood, which has just had one of its best years, with more than $100M (the magic number for a hit), and six of them making more than $200M!

While some small films are making it big, most of the certified blockbusters this year have been expensive productions.

"Spend more to make even more" seems to be the filmmaking formula of choice this season, especially since Hollywood movies' income from showing abroad now accounts for more than one-third of their total grosses.

Since language can be a problem in some countries, movies with big, brash visuals are preferred and they cost a lot of money to make.

So, that formula is still operative for new films that are set to be shown early next year. They include:

"X-Men 2." In this sequel, the X-Men face old villain Magneto (**Ian McKellan**) again, but he is joined by a human named Stryker (**Brian Cox**) and a vicious woman named Yuriko (**Kelly Hu**), who has it in for Wolverine (**Hugh Jackman**).

So, Professor Xavier's (**Patrick Stewart**) school for mutants has its hands full foiling these bad guys' vilest schemes!

"Solaris." Described as one of the most intriguing and visually-enthralling sci-fi movies made in recent years, **George Clooney**'s latest starrer is touted as a possible Oscar contender in some categories.

Clooney plays a psychologist, Dr. Chris Kelvin, who is sent to investigate a mysterious death on the space station orbiting the planet Solaris. He also discovers evidence that the fluorescent world may be more than just an inanimate floating sphere.

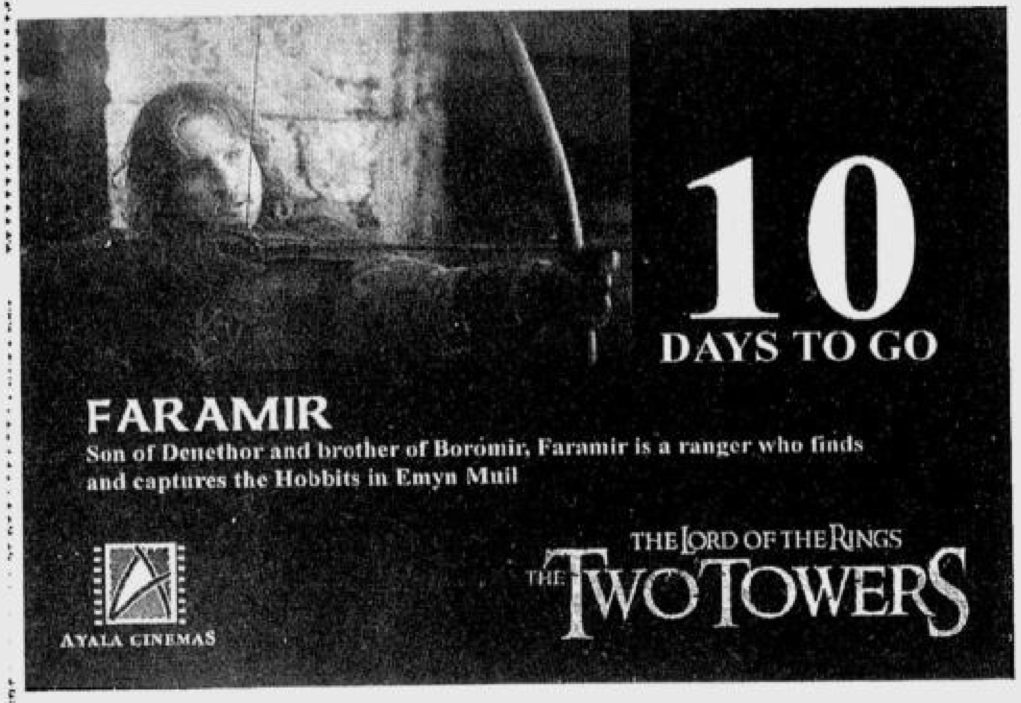
The planet may be a living sentiment organism capable of playing mind games on its inhabitants! For instance, crew members are seduced by odd apparitions from the past, and Kelvin begins to entertain visits from his dead wife (**Natasha McElhone**).

"Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World." Based on the best-selling novels of **Patrick O'Brien**, this film stars **Russell Crowe** as "Lucky" Jack Aubrey, who pits his crew on the H.M.S. Surprise against a much better armed ship, in a chase that takes him to the far side of the world.

"Hero." Acclaimed director **Zhang Yimou** of **Jet Li** and **Zhang Ziyi** in this true story about the first emperor of China as an assassin.

"Phone Booth." This intense drama takes place in and around a single phone booth in New York City, where a man (**Collin Farrell**) is being watched by a rooftop killer with a

BIG/ A24



10
DAYS TO GO
FARAMIR
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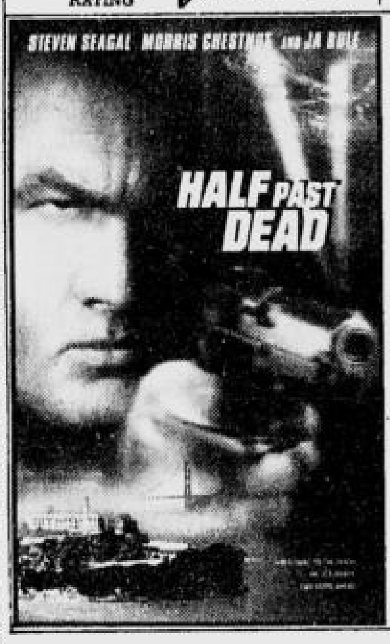

STEVEN SEAGAL MORRIS CHESTNUT and JA RULE
HALF PAST DEAD

Special New Year Presentation!

Steven Seagal back in Action

International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."

The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.

Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.

The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwing martial artist.

OPENS JANUARY 11

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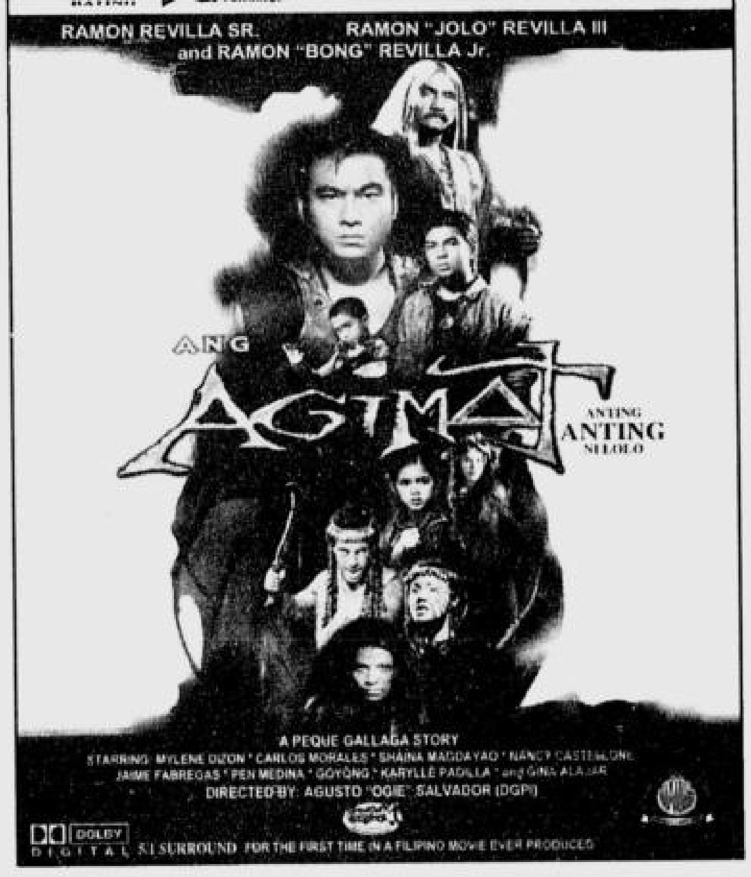

RAMON REVILLA SR. RAMON "JOLO" REVILLA III
and RAMON "BONG" REVILLA Jr.
ANG AGIMAT
ANTING ANTING SI LOLO
A PEQUE GALLAGA STORY
STARRING: MYLENE DIZON * CARLOS MORALES * SHAINA MAGDAYAO * NANCY CASTIGLIONE
JAIME FABREGAS * PEN MEDINA * GOYONG * KARYLLE PADILLA * and GINA ALAJAR
DIRECTED BY: AGUSTO "OGIE" SALVADOR (DGPI)
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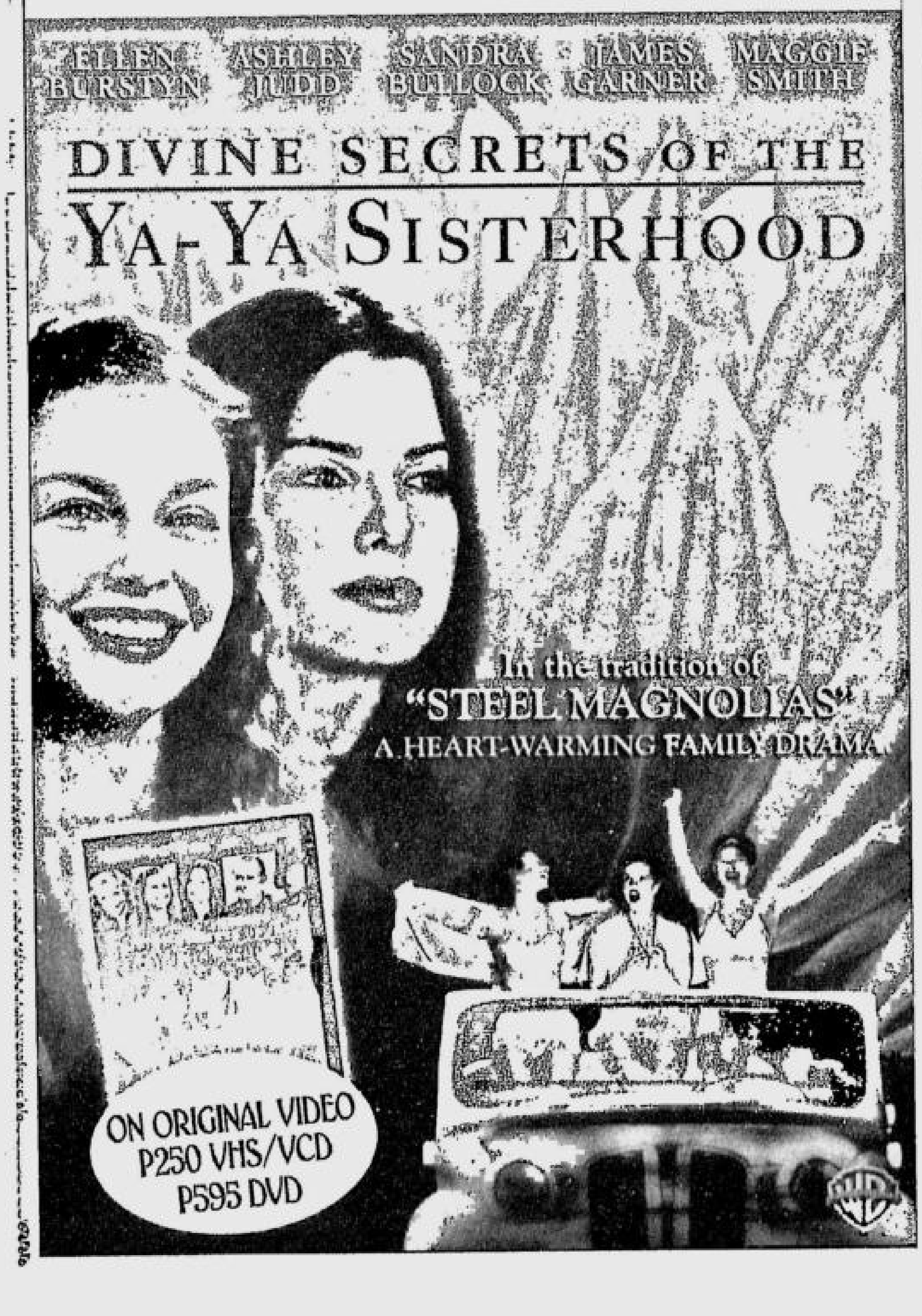

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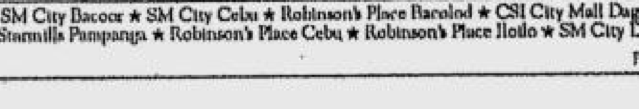

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5048. Series of 2002

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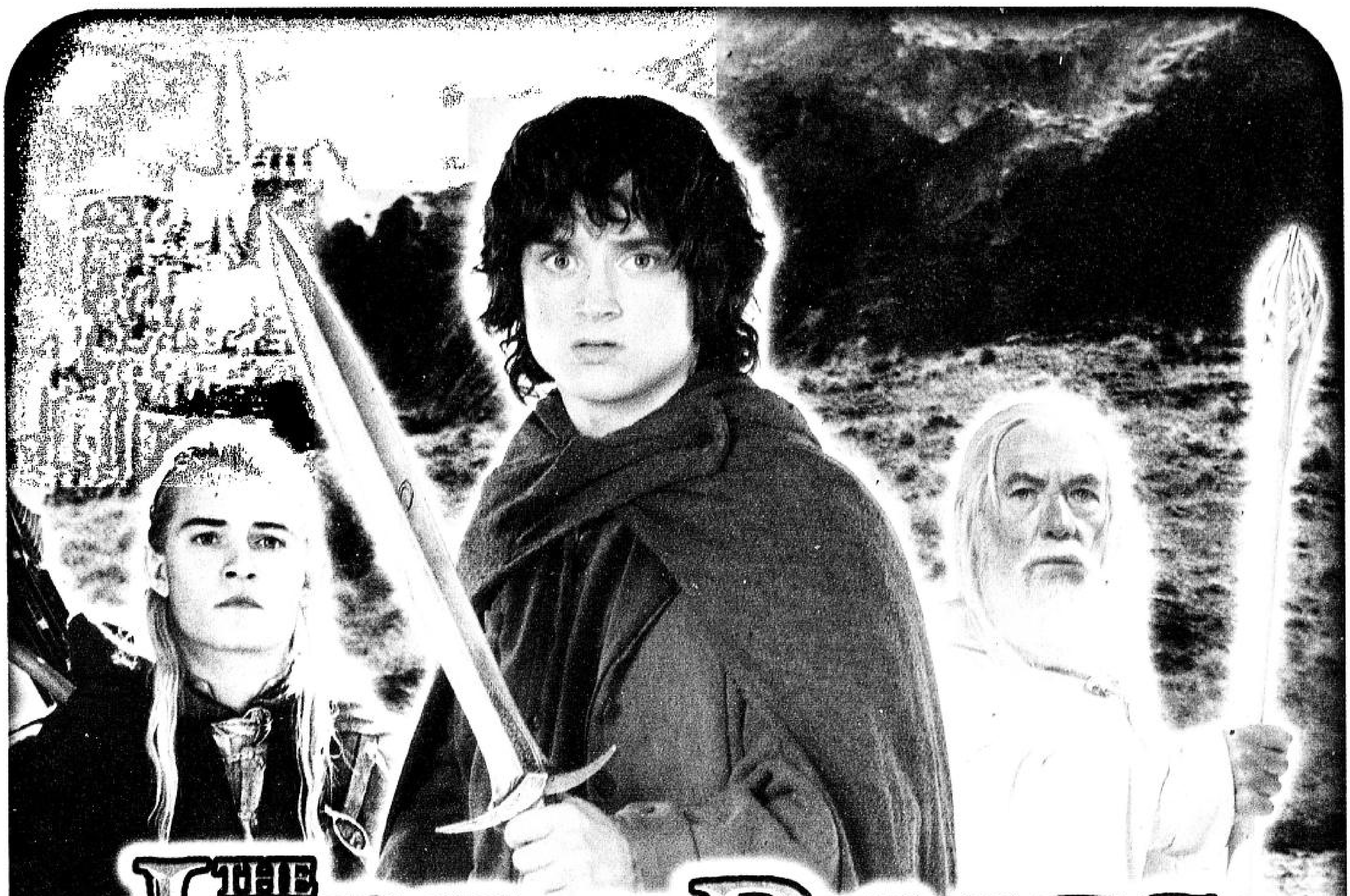
THE SMART Cinema Club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THE TWO TOWERS

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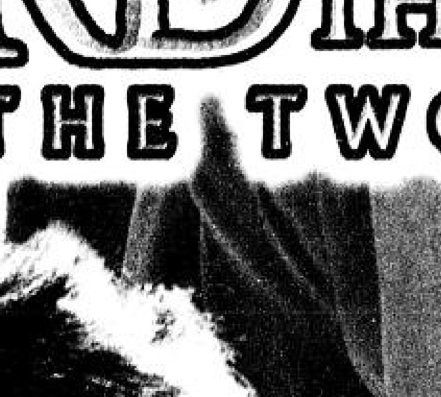

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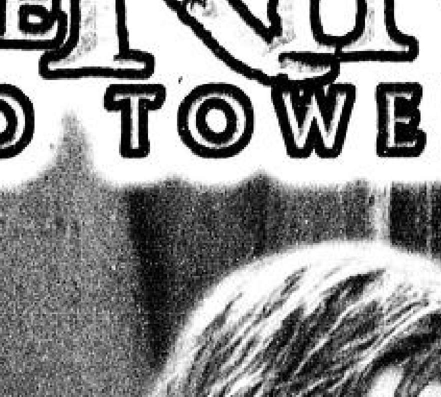

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See flyers for more details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5052, Series of 2002.

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Group Graphics*	**GROUP LOTR**
Picture Messages*	**PIC LOTR**
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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◆ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

DEBT CONDONATION

Co-ops seen slashing rates by ₱1.66/kWh

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ELECTRIC cooperatives are seen collectively cutting their rates by 0.7 centavos to P1.66 per kilowatt-hour as a result of the government's decision to condone P17 billion worth of their debts.

In a news statement, the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, a party-list group, disclosed that cooperatives in the same regions would file joint petitions with the Energy Regulatory Commission.

"The condonation of the debts is being fast-tracked because (President Macapagal-Arroyo) has ordered so," Apec Rep. Ernesto Pablo said.

He said Apec, which groups the country's 199 power cooperatives, had also secured an agreement with the ERC and the National Electrification Administration to simplify the requirements for debt condonation and revise a previously set formula for the consequent rate reduction.

The party-list group has assailed the formula as "detrimental to the viability" of electric cooperatives.

Also, the debt condonation and rate reduction were initially opposed, as the government required new performance and rehabilitation targets that Apec said served to impose too many conditions for the debts to be written off.

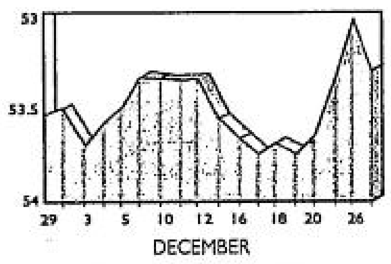
The ERC said earlier this month that it was deferring the issuance of decisions on other electric cooperatives' application for rate unbundling, as it was reviewing the policies used in making earlier decisions.

Acting ERC Chair Leticia Ibay said some of the four cooperatives whose applications the ERC had decided in November filed motions for reconsideration early this month.

The four-member commission issued on Nov. 15 decisions on the applications of Pampanga I Electric Cooperative, Pangasinan I Electric Cooperative, Sorsogon I Electric Cooperative and Zamboanga del Sur II Electric Cooperative.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



DECEMBER

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₱ 53.30 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 27, 2002

¥ 119.98 = $ 1

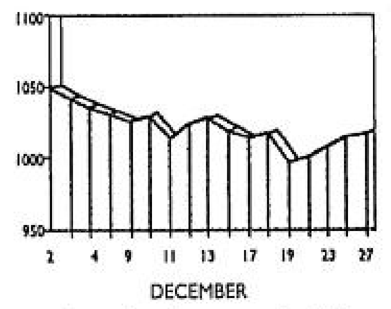
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 27, 2002

GOLD: $349.50-$350.50

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 27, 2002

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



DECEMBER

(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares up 0.3%

SHARE prices closed 0.3 percent higher on Friday, the last trading day of the year, due to a technical rebound and window-dressing, dealers said.

"There's not much movement because it's a long holiday and there's nothing new to reckon with," Summit Securities president Harry Liu said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 3.08 points to close at 1,018.41. Since the end of last year, the index lost 149.67 points or 12.8 percent.

Turnover rose to 155.4 million shares worth P371.3 million compared with 60.15 million shares worth P143.06 million traded on Thursday.

The market is closed for holidays from Monday to Wednesday this week. Trading resumes on Jan. 2.

Strike-bound PLDT, facing resistance to work force reduction, closed unchanged at P270. *AFP*

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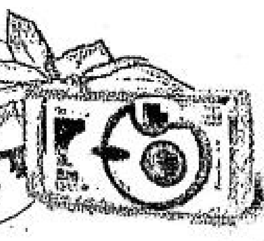

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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 5150, SERIES OF 2002

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N. American railway firm keen on BCDA's Northrail project

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CANADIAN National Railway (CN Rail), one of North America's largest railway operator, has touched base with Philippine government officials to get more details on the proposed North Luzon Railway project.

Renato V. Diaz, presidential assistant for regional development in north Luzon, said CN Rail was attracted by the potential of a railroad project especially with the closer integration of the former American bases in Subic and Clark.

Diaz said that while it has yet to firm up an offer for the Northrail project, he was expecting CN Rail—the only railroad in North America to cross the continent on all points with serving ports on the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts—to make a proposal within the year.

He said that despite concerns on the high cost of the project and the difficulty in clearing out the route, the government was keen on pursuing the Northrail project because of its critical role in the development of a Subic-Clark growth corridor.

The Bases Conversion Development Authority, through North Luzon Railways Corp., is currently consolidating the blueprint for the development of the Northrail project and it is evaluating investment proposals from a number of foreign investors.

The BCDA signed in September a Memorandum of Understanding with the state-owned China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. (CNMEC) which offered to implement the Northrail project using the Philippine National Railways Luzon rail network as a backbone. The PNR line has been closed since 1982 due to serious damage incurred from natural calamities.

CNMEC has offered to shoulder the cost of the feasibility study that will determine the viability of the project and to facilitate the project financing from the Export Import Bank of China.

Globe, IBM putting up backup IT facility

By Abigail L. Ho

AYALA-OWNED Globe Telecom Inc. and IBM Philippines have entered into a partnership that will provide clients of GlobeQuest DataCenters—the Internet data center (IDC) of Globe's wireline data services arm GlobeQuest—a backup facility for their information technology systems.

Under their agreement, GlobeQuest will provide the facility that will house the equipment while IBM will provide the expertise in operating the machine.

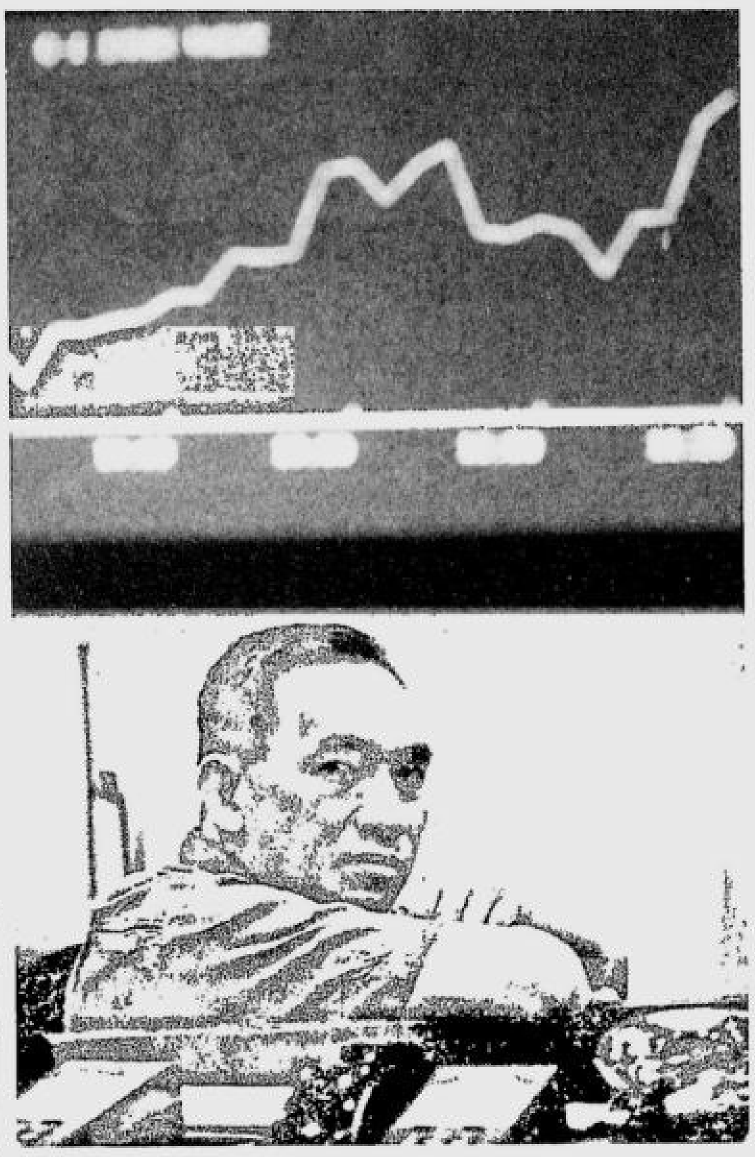
GlobeQuest head Jesus Romero said demand for backup IT systems had picked up due to threats of terrorism and natural calamities.

Most companies, considering their heavy dependence on IT systems, stand to lose huge amounts of money and precious data in the event of a disaster.

"Without a backup facility, the cost of system unavailability will increase dramatically. Corporations need to resume critical operations within the fastest time possible. That's why GlobeQuest and IBM are here to make that possible," he said in a statement.

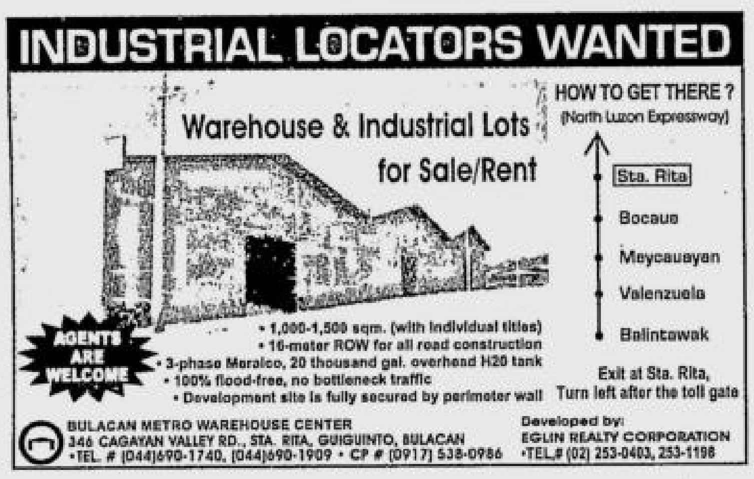
Even the conservative Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has decided to join the IT bandwagon in the wake of the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States last year by mandating local banks to set up a backup site for all their core data.

While the demand for business continuity and disaster recovery solutions continue to climb, Romero pointed out that not all companies could afford their own backup data systems, which are costly to build and maintain.



LAST TRADING DAY OF '02

A TRADER waits for order as the Philippine Stock Exchange ended the last trading session of the year slightly higher on Dec. 27, 2002. The benchmark Philippine Stock Index closed up 3.08 points, or 0.3 percent, at 1,018.41 after staying in negative territory for most session. The index rose 1.7 percent during the holiday-shortened week but fell 12.9 percent on the year. REUTERS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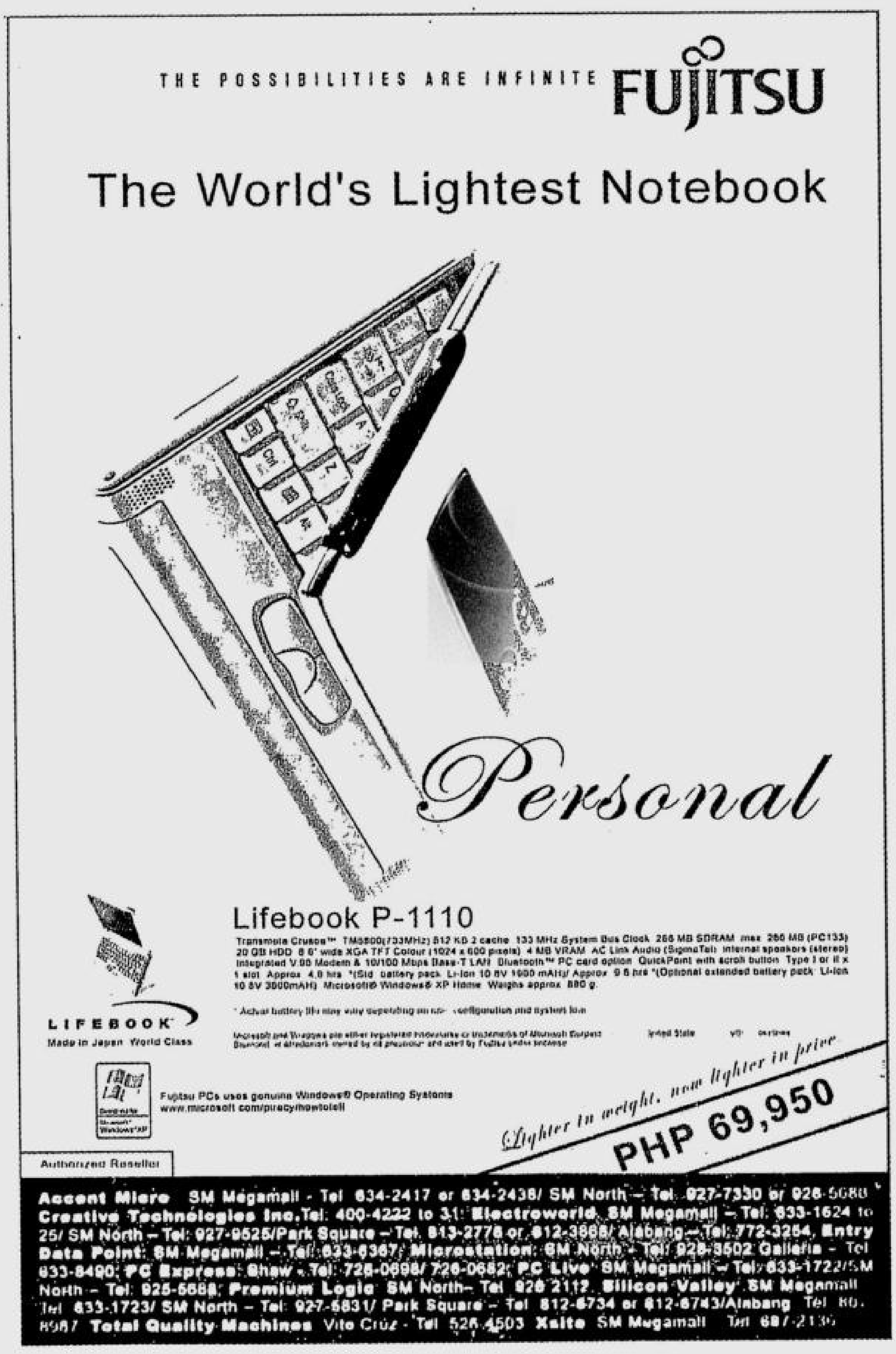
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, December 27, 2002

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	18.5	17.5	18.5	795,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	34	34.5	33.5	33.5	450,600
China Banking Corp.	625	625	625	625	200
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27	27.5	27	27	128,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	379,800
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	80	80	80	80	300
Philippine National Bank	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.5	12,200
Security Bank Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.75	17.25	17.5	25,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	225	230	225	230	140
Manulife Financial Corp.	1150	1150	1150	1150	210
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.72	140,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	900	900	900	900	1,070
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16	16	16	16	10,800
Diversified Fin. Network	3.5	4	3.5	3.95	1,835,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.4	2,010,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	445	447.5	445	447.5	91,880
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.022	0.022	2,900,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.013	0.015	0.013	0.015	1,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.85	281,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	270	272.5	270	270	100,370
Ivantage Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28	250,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	9,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8,000
Manila Electric Co. B	9	9	8.8	8.8	1,197,000
Petron Corporation	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.56	2,336,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.96	1	0.96	1	9,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	156,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.42	2.4	2.42	390,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	190,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	112,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	210,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.2	25,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18	18.5	18	18.25	2,011,200
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34.5	35	34	35	187,400
San Miguel Corp. A	59	60	59	60	555,400
San Miguel Corp. B	64	66	64	66	585,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.36	160,000
Ayala Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	624,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.3	2.26	2.26	110,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	20,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	3,000,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	2.22	2.24	2.22	2.24	14,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.105	0.11	0.105	0.11	1,140,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	250,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	300,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.2	8.2	8	8.1	117,000
Ionics Inc.	0.96	0.97	0.96	0.96	1,140,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	50,000
Medco Holdings	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.56	0.58	0.56	0.58	640,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.16	740,000
Music Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	600,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	600,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	140,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.45	3.5	3.45	3.5	20,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.25	0.23	0.25	1,200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	7,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	210,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	555,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	9	9	9	9	1,000
Spi Technologies Inc.	11	11.75	11	11.75	175,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	250,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	31.5	34	30.5	33	45,500
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	16.25	16.25	16	16.25	147,100
Jollibee Warrants	17.75	18	17.75	18	3,900
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	9	6	9	644,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.5	4.55	4.45	4.55	4,078,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	1100	0.11	0.11	0.11	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	1100	0.115	0.11	0.115	1,840,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	8200	0.83	0.82	0.83	330,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.98	2	1.96	2	4,060,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1300	0.14	0.12	0.12	660,000
SM Development Corp.	1	1.1	1	1.06	42,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.75	4.8	4.7	4.75	9,932,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	15,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.02	1.2	1	1.2	135,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	1,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.002	0.0024	0.002	0.0024	30,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	29,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	800,000

CURRENCIES

Dec. 27, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.968804	1.000000	53.436000
Japan	Yen	0.008054	0.008313	0.444200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.546503	1.596300	85.299900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.124231	0.128231	6.852200
Switzerland	Franc	0.689051	0.711238	38.005700
Canada	Dollar	0.626045	0.646204	34.530600
Singapore	Dollar	0.557425	0.575374	30.745700
Australia	Dollar	0.544946	0.562493	30.057400
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.570046	2.652801	141.755100
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.258348	0.266667	14.249600
Brunei	Dollar	0.554300	0.572148	30.573300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000113	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022609	0.023337	1.247000
UAE	Dirham	0.263793	0.272287	14.549900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.032200	55.156600
Argentina	Peso	0.280813	0.289855	15.488700
Brazil	REAL	0.276801	0.285714	15.267400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134649	0.138985	7.426800
India	Rupee	0.020208	0.020859	1.114600
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.254983	0.263193	14.064000
Mexico	New Peso	0.094934	0.097991	5.236200
New Zealand	Dollar	0.500287	0.516396	27.594100
Norway	Kroner	0.137468	0.141894	7.582200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016652	0.017188	0.918500
South Africa	Rand	0.108977	0.112486	6.010800
Korea	Won	0.000807	0.000833	0.044500
Sweden	Kroner	0.109519	0.113045	6.040700
Syria	Pound	0.018811	0.019417	1.037600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027919	0.028818	1.539900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000704	0.000727	0.038800

Seaweed firm eyes higher earnings

CEBU-BASED seaweed exporter Shemberg Marketing Corp. is optimistic that its P80-million expansion and modernization program will result in an increase in earnings next year.

Shemberg CEO Benson Dakay said the company's decision to upgrade its plant would make its existing facilities more efficient.

"All these new investments will enable us to save, increase our production and generate better earnings," said Dakay.

The expansion and modernization program will make Shemberg the largest semi-refined carrageenan manufacturer in the world, he added.

The plant upgrading will increase the capacity of the company's Mandaue City plant to 5,500 metric tons from its current capacity of 3,500 metric tons. The Zamboanga plant will be converted into a food-grade processing plant.

Shemberg's financial consultant Ruben Almendras said the company was financially stable as its Ebitda as of December 2001 reached P120 million, while its sister company Shemberg Biotech Corp. recorded an income of P22.7 million. *Christine A. Gaylican*

BCDA may turn over IT park venture to NDC

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is willing to turn over to the National Development Co. the planned information technology park in the state-owned property inside Fort Bonifacio, including the $90 million it secured from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

BCDA president Rufo Colayco said the board felt that developing the Bonifacio Information Special Technology Zone was well within the purview of NDC, the state's private investment arm, and that BCDA was better off concentrating on other development projects.

Colayco said that NDC should be quicker and more focused in undertaking the IT park project. The NDC has long been planning to set up an incubation center and venture capital fund for IT-related activities but it has been hobbled by financial problems and inability to tap new loans.

BCDA had carved 25 hectares of the Fort Bonifacio property (lots outside the Fort Bonifacio Global City which is a 55-45 joint venture between Bonifacio Land Corp. and BCDA) for the IT park.

But despite getting financing from JBIC, the project has yet to be implemented. The project has been registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority in 2000 as an IT Park which would make its potential locators eligible for fiscal perks such as income tax breaks, tax and duty-free import of capital equipment, and preferred income tax rates.

The Bonifacio IT zone is just one of the nine projects granted IT park status by Peza. The others are Eastwood City Cyberpark of Megaworld Properties and Holdings Inc.; E-Square Information Technology Park of FBDC; Northgate Cyberzone of the Filinvest Group; RCBC Plaza IT Park of the Yuchengco group; Robinson's Cyberpark in Mandaluyong; Filinvest Asia Corp.'s PBCom Tower in Makati; Cebu Property Ventures and Development Corp.'s Cebu Civic and Trade Center (CCTC) in Lapu-Lapu City, and First Centro Inc.'s Cebu Cybertown IT Park in Cebu City.

People, Events & Products

Email: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

'Bee a millionaire' in Jollibee's 25th year

JOLLIBEE wants you to Bee A Millionaire!

The country's most favorite fast food chain is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2003. As a way of sharing its success with everyone who made this Philippine milestone possible, Jollibee is giving away millions in cash prizes, appliances and Jollibee products, through this grand and exciting promo.

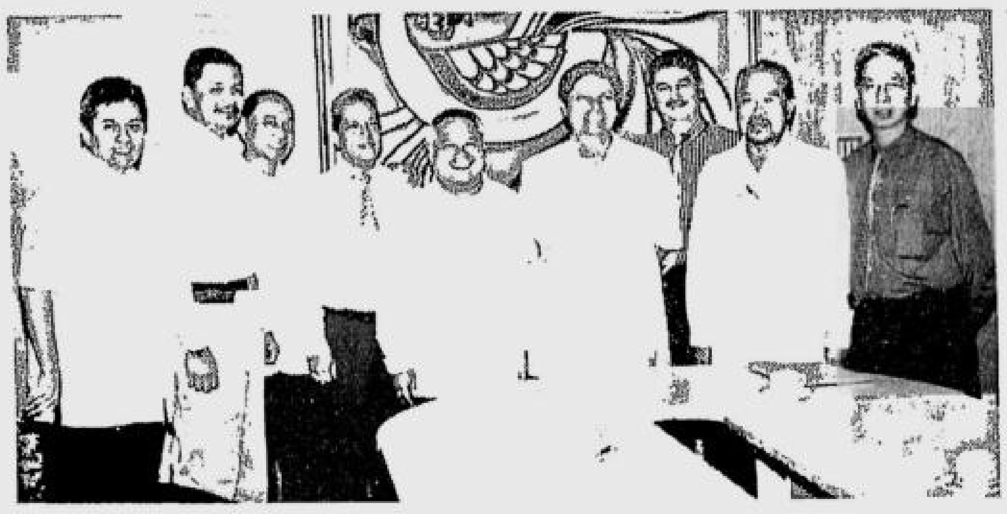
Starting today, Jan. 1, until March 20, six lucky Jollibee patrons will win P1 million each. Every P125 single receipt food purchase entitles customers to one scratch card, which gives them two ways of winning exciting prizes from Jollibee.

Customers can win Jollibee products instantly when three of the four slots on the scratch card reveal the same image of the instant Jollibee prize. These may be redeemed at the counter immediately.

To qualify for the million pesos or Samsung appliances in the monthly raffle, simply fill up the raffle stub with your name, address, telephone numbers and signature and drop this off at the designated drop box at the Jollibee store.

"25 years na kasalo ng Pilipino ang Jollibee. With the support and loyalty of our Filipino customers, Jollibee has emerged as the Philippines' number one fast food chain. We want to continue making a difference in other people's lives and at the same time, thank everyone who continues to support our products," said Inez S. Reyes, Jollibee vice president for Marketing.

So join Jollibee as it celebrates its 25th anniversary – who knows, you could Bee A Millionaire on your next visit to Jollibee in 2003!



MEAT PROCESSORS CALL ON DA CHIEF

Officials of the Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. (Pampi) paid a courtesy call to Sec. Luis P. Lorenzo Jr. recently to brief the agriculture chief on the industry's situation. From left are Dr. Manuel Rocha, consultant, Ray Lapid, director (R. Lapid's Chicharon), Ador Ordonez, director (Roel's Foods Corp), Cezar Cruz Jr., vice president (Monterey Foods Corp.), Felix Tiukinhoy Jr., president (Virginia Food Inc.), Lorenzo, Leo Uylangco of the Purefoods-Hormel Co., Francisco Buencamino, executive director, and Fernando King, secretary (King Sue Ham & Sausage Co.).

Newsboy Koolboy prizes galore

INQUIRER Newsdealers Andres Toledo, Wilson Pascual, Manuel de Villeres and Menandro San Juan with their newsboys receive their prizes from Inquirer AVP for circulation Glo Lardizabal (4th from left) at the Inquirer head office in Makati City.

INQUIRER provincial manager Rene Langahin (right) awards Newsboy Koolboy prizes to newsdealers Osmundo Benoza and Norma del Rosario and their newsboys. Also shown are Inquirer field supervisors Bong Viray and Tony Companero and Inquirer Publications Inc. circulation manager Raymond Rivera (left).

IPI CIRCULATION manager Rivera (left) poses with Inquirer newsdealers Andres Toledo, Manuel de Villeres, Menandro San Juan, Wilson Pascual and Jun Suasin and their respective newsboys during redemption day. Also shown are IPI sales personnel Roy Mendiola and Inquirer provincial manager Rene Langahin.

HOST ROTARY CLUB TAPS CHARISMS

The Rotary Club of Palanyag-Paranaque, the host club for the RI 3830 District Conference 2003, recently appointed Charisms Inc. to handle the PR and event management for the 3830 District Conference on March 14 and 15 at Westin Philippine Plaza. Present during the signing of the MOA are the District 3830 officers, standing from left, Oca Gendrano, Gerry Vidal, Rene Alicbusan, Gus Tambunting, Mar Jimenez, Anthony Mendoza, Tas Diaz and Roland Reyes. Seated, from left, are Juliet Cruz, the district governor's spouse, Jun Bernabe, chair of Discon 2003, Billy Rockwell, president and CEO of Charisms Inc., governor Romy V. Cruz, district 3830 governor, Noli Aldip, president, Rotary Club of Palanyag-Paranaque, and Ernie Sanchez, charter president, Rotary Club of Palanyag-Paranaque. All are invited to celebrate. Avail yourself of discounts for early registration. Call the conference secretariat at 826-7453, 826-7419, 825-1054 to 56, or e-mail rvc@gemphil.com or gti@gemphil.com.

DAVID'S SALON NOW IN RIVERBANKS

Marikina City Mayor Marides C. Fernando leads the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the newly opened David's Salon Riverbanks. David Charlton (left), president of David's Salon Inc., joins the mayor in the ceremony. David's, the country's biggest chain of salons with over 150 branches nationwide, further boosts Marikina Riverbanks as one of the trendiest commercial centers in the metropolis today. It offers quality and trendy hairstyling and hair care services at affordable prices. Customers get a 15-percent discount on all hair treatments at David's Salon Riverbanks as an introductory promo.

St. Scho Manila HS '87 grand homecoming

ST. SCHOLASTICA'S College, Manila high school batch 1987 will celebrate its 15th anniversary homecoming reunion on Jan. 4 at the Sister Kuniberta Hall at St. Scholastica's College campus, Leon Guinto, Manila at 6:30 p.m. The organizing committee calls on all St. Scho high school batch 1987 members to come celebrate and relive old times. Fun, games and lots of raffle prizes await. This event is sponsored by Ponds, Close-Up, David's Salon, Insular Life and The Flower Farm Corp. For inquiries and details, call the secretariat committee at 0917-5378486 or 0917-8994103.

HOLIDAY MADE SPECIAL

It has been a successful season for Barbie as she accomplished all her holiday events in style. The 'Barbie as Rapunzel' musical play was shown in five major malls in Metro Manila and received warm applause from the viewing public who enjoyed the mini-fashion show, musical play, and games. Barbie graced the show as the holiday lead doll of Barbie as Rapunzel. Ken was Prince Stefan, Kelly was the Petal Princess, Lorena as the Peacock Princess, Melody as the Angel Princess, and Tommy as the Li'l Prince, and an Enchanted Tower Playset. Her kiddie models accompanied her on stage. Teatro Tomasino performed on stage the musical rendition of Barbie as Rapunzel. As the highlight of her holiday specials, Barbie had a special charity screening Nov. 15, with Bantay Bata 163 as the beneficiary, at the drive-in movie under the Cool Cinema Nites event of the Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. All dolls, licensed apparel and accessories are now available, and are exclusively distributed by Richwell Trading Corp.

Product FILES

Puma pounces back

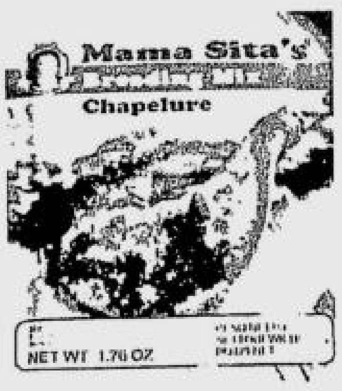
PUMA, the German sportswear and sneaker company, is making a comeback, brandishing a new look and attitude that lives up to its name as a ferocious feline. The pouncing cat logo is now seen and used not only as a serious athletic brand, but a lifestyle choice as well.

"Our goal is to be the most desirable sport-influenced lifestyle brand out there," said 38-year-old Puma CEO Jochen Zeitz. "Puma is soccer, it's fashion, it's lifestyle. It seems a jumble, but is a very focused plan. We like surprising people."

In Europe and Asia, Puma attracts customers to its new concept stores. Locally, the brand was acquired last year by Planet Sports Inc. (PSI), the largest operator of sports retail concept shops in the Philippines.

According to Ian Woodcock, Puma International's director for licensee support, the partnership between Puma and PSI is significant because of the exposure and marketing concepts that Planet Sports will contribute to Puma's retail interests. Puma will also benefit from PSI's stable distribution business. Woodcock noted that in spite of the unpredictable economy experienced worldwide, PSI continues to grow in the local market.

A different kind of breading



TIRED of the usual fried stuff coated with leftover bread crumbs? Mama Sita's Breading (Chapelure) Mix provides a savory alternative to plain deep frying with its mixture of maize, starch, garlic and selected spices that adds sizzle to chicken, pork chop or fish fillet.

Also ideal served with Mama Sita's Pure Labuyo Red Hot Pepper Sauce, Sweet Chili Sauce or Sweet and Sour Sauce.

Available in 50-gram packets, Mama Sita's Breading Mix carries with it a heritage of cooking excellence that lives on in every Mama Sita's product. Manufactured by Marigold Commodities Corp., a Filipino company owned by a family of cooks and food lovers, Mama Sita's mixes and sauces are all-natural and preservative-free.

McCann-Erickson marks anniversary with campaign

TO CELEBRATE its 100th anniversary, McCann-Erickson World Group has launched a global public service effort titled 1000 Voices, 100 Years which encouraged all offices within its network to identify and embrace causes important to the countries in which they operate. Emily Abrera, chair of McCann-Erickson Philippines, says, "Yes, the celebration may be global, but the public concerns we will tackle are definitely local."

In the Philippines, McCann's research has confirmed a general feeling of despair among Filipinos due to the country's long list of unsolved social issues. Many expressed the belief that if the government with all its resources and power can't do anything about the traffic mess or the peace and order situation, what can an average citizen do? Filipinos often bewail the situation, but leave it up to the government to solve the myriad problems in society today.

To help the country overcome this malaise, McCann Erickson Philippines has created a new public service ad campaign. It is built on the insight that it's impossible to clean up the mess in the country if no one wants to begin by cleaning up the mess in his own front yard. Bong Banal, the art director who came up with the idea for the campaign, says, "We wanted a campaign that would remind Filipinos that they are empowered to create change. And the way to do that is to focus on small steps, everyday positive acts anyone can do."

The way the ad campaign got produced was certainly in keeping with the spirit of the campaign. A lot of people did a lot of little things. Charlie Altomonte, a well-known photographer, donated one Saturday to take the pictures. Femar, a strategic partner of McCann, did all the pre-press work for free. And the major dailies gave precious support. Ricki Arches, president of McCann-Erickson Philippines and an ardent supporter of the project, says, "I can't think of a better way for McCann-Erickson to celebrate its centennial. We've won the award for best in community service at the Agency of the Year awards every time we've joined the competition. I think this campaign is a reaffirmation of our tradition of giving back to the community in which we do business."

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late **NUMERIANO R. MEDEL** has been extra-judicially settled with his heir as per Doc. No. 225; Page No. 46; Book No. XV; Series of 2002, before Atty. Jimmy D. Lacebal, Notary Public, Mandaluyong City.
(PDI-Dec. 25, Jan. 1, 8, 2003).

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

*ANYONE KNOWING THE WHEREABOUTS OF **"ATE PRECY"** WHO OWNED AND MANAGED THE BIRTHSTONE CLUB ON McARTHUR HIGHWAY IN ANGELES CITY DURING 1979-1980, OR MY SON, RAYMUNDO RAMOS WHO WAS LIVING WITH HER AT THE TIME, PLEASE CONTACT ME. E-MAIL IS: snidely731@aol.com, mailing address is Nenita B. Ramos 2401 Sombrero Drive Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910-1135 USA, phone is (719) 328-0420. I WOULD APPRECIATE THE RESPONSE OF ANYONE WHO CAN PROVIDE VALID INFORMATION AS TO THE LOCATION, ADDRESS(ES), PHONE NUMBERS OR E-MAIL ADDRESSES OF HER OR MY SON.*
THANK YOU, NENITA B. RAMOS

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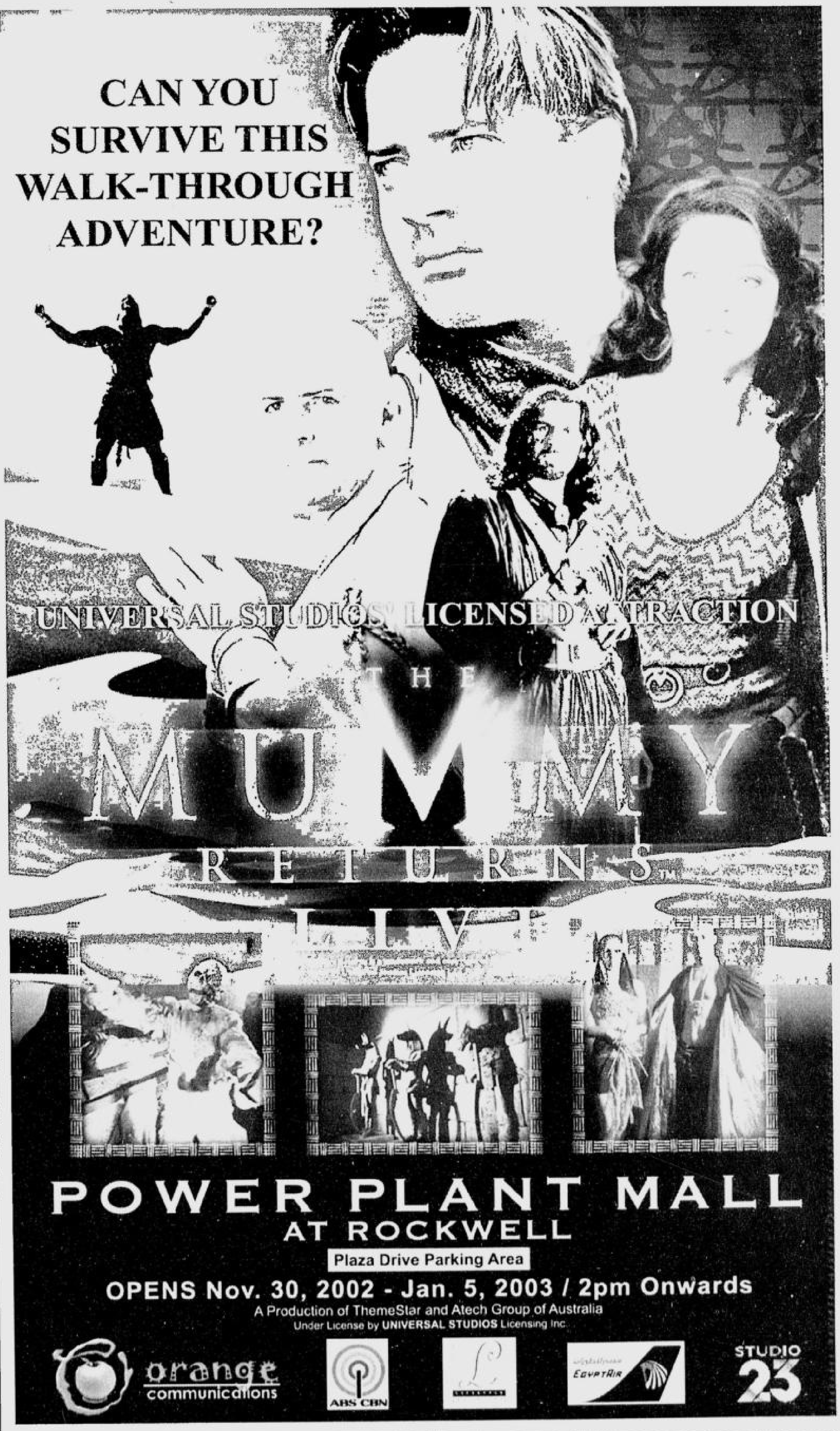

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Our Dearly Beloved Papa Max

DR. MAXIMO VERGEL MENDOZA

December 27, 1928 - December 28, 2002
Woodland Hills, California

He has joined his beloved wife **LEE**, in eternal life; children **Alejandro & Carissa, Baby & Edmund Fernando, Anton & Marissa, Isabelle & Gary Acuña, Jay & Susan, Michael & Grace, Mark**; grandchildren **Paul, Jordan, Jeremy, Leslie Anne, Toni Marie, Maria Beatriz, Vince, Dodo, Anna & Jacob**; brothers & sisters **Ate** (†), **Doc & Ninang** (†), **Ida & Ben, Chris**; in-laws **Lola Sefa, Abet & Lu, Pito & Ollie, Mely & Tom**; uncles, aunts, cousins & other relatives and friends request the pious to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Gates Kingsley & Gates Mortuary, Canoga Park.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 4, 2003 at the Forest Lawn Hollywood Hills, California after the morning Mass.

"We know
that God
raised the
Lord Jesus
from
death. He
will raise
us to life
with Jesus.
He will
present us,
along with
you
to God."
2 Corinthians
4:14

GUILLERMA PAZ PLATON

of Tanauan City, Batangas
and Carson, California, USA

Peacefully joined her Creator on December 30, 2002 at the age of 89.

Her late husband **GERTRUDO** (†); loving children **AURELIA, HONORIO, ROMEO, PURIFICACION, ESTER, COL. BAYLON PLATON** (Ret.), **JOSEFA, SOFRONIO, TERESITA, VICTORIA**; in-laws, grandchildren, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest.

Her body lies in state at the Immaculate Concepcion Chapel, Sacred Heart Church, Makati City.

Interment will be in Tanauan City on January 4, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.

Our Dearly Beloved

EDUARDO GUERRERO CORONEL

(December 7, 1922 – December 29, 2002)

Peacefully joined our Lord on December 29, 2002 at the age of 80.

His loving wife **Florencia Lilles Guanzon**;

Children : **Therese** and **Al (Santos)**, **Edgar** and **Celina (Martirez)**, **Danny** and **Grace (Reyes)**, **Grace** and **Louie (Agbayani)**, **Arthur** and **Janet (Litton)**, **Malou** and **Tito (de Venecia)**, **Florence Coronel**, **Felix** and **Luz (Sarmiento)**, **Joey Coronel**;

Grandchildren : **Richie**, **Michelle** and **Marielle Santos**, **Sasa**, **Trina**, **Macky** and **Carlo Coronel**, **Maxine**, **Danica Coronel**, **Paolo** and **Jica Coronel**, **Isabelle**, **Alin**, **Tintin** and **Marco de Venecia**, **Ariana**, **Patricia**, and **Maia Coronel**;

Brothers and Sisters : **Dr. Virgilio** and **Dra. Cheding** (†) **Ignacio**, **Loreto** and **Angel** (†) **Lagman**, **Flora** (†) and **Vladimir** (†) **Ignacio**, **Catalino** and **Irene Coronel**, **Aureliano** and **Erlinda Coronel**, **Felicisimo** and **Lucita Coronel**, **Rustico** and **Aida Coronel**;

Relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sta. Maria de la Strada Parish Church, Katipunan Road corner Pansol Street, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass will be on Thursday, January 2, 2003 at 9:00 A.M. at Sta. Maria de la Strada Parish Church.

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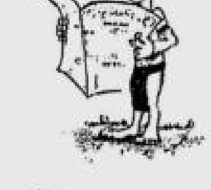

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PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

A NEW YEAR MUST

The CEO survival kit

By Paul Heng

BEING a CEO these days is much tougher. Staying as one, in the same organization, is even much tougher.

Something interesting has been happening in many boardrooms. If you have been following corporate America, you will not fail to notice that the employment tenure of CEOs has become much shorter.

This trend has emerged even before the Enron Corporation debacle. There are a variety of reasons why this is so. One of them stems from the fact that most shareholders have a very low level of tolerance for what they would classify as under-performance.

If quarterly targets are not met consecutively two or three times, shareholders and fellow Board members are quick to show the poor CEO the way to the door. Rightly or wrongly, this has been happening. Perhaps, there is one word to describe the phenomenon-'greed'. People are not only more interested in getting rich; they want it in a relatively shorter period of time. Global recession or not, they don't seem to care too much. Hence, CEOs face tougher challenges in the coming years.

Given this changing landscape, what can CEOs do to minimize the chances of being shown their way to the door?

Much risk

Sad to say, the answer may not be too obvious to some CEOs. The fact is that the paid-CEO's job is at as much risk as his subordinates. In fact, the CEO is often at more risk since his is the most visible and senior position there is in any organization. This fact, coupled with the reality that most, if not all, CEO-level positions are paid the highest amount of compensation on the payroll, makes the position even more prone to performance scrutiny.

Besides the usual steps one has to take in relation to managing one's career, for example, taking a self-audit at regular intervals, what else can the CEO do to stay afloat?

Most organizations, especially the listed ones, make annual announcements to their shareholders regarding their business goals and strategies at the beginning of each financial year. As the organization's CEO delivering the speech, you must ensure that you follow through and deliver what has been said and promised. Not only must you do this, what is more important is that you must be seen doing it. Like it or not, you are always under the watchful eyes of shareholders and employees. In some cases, being seen 'walking the talk' can save your job should forecasted performance not take place due to unforeseen circumstances.

Spending

Managing spending is another talent that effective CEOs possess. The Asian Wall Street Journal reported recently that Thomas O. Ryder, CEO of Reader's Digest, in order to manage costs, ordered the sale of the organization's private jet as well as a US$100 million art collection.

Managing costs is, arguably, one of the most crucial tasks of the CEO, regardless of the size of your business. Ask any successful businessman and he will tell you that managing the kitty or cash flow well is one of the key factors leading to success. When the business grows, this key skill continues to be applicable.

One of the things CEOs do not do is delegate their role. They do not delegate key tasks such as managing investor relationships and providing financial commentary. This does not need elaboration, though I would like to share a good example of how delegation can go very wrong. We worked with an MD of a tire-manufacturing organization. The American MD was based in Taiwan. His 15-year high-flying record in the same company was extinguished as one of his lieutenants was tasked to a meeting with the media. In the absence of the CEO, he conveyed the wrong financial statements which completely misled the media and hence the public. The press reported the following day that the company's share prices plummeted 26 percent.

Lesson

Another example to reinforce this point: we had worked with a Singaporean MD of a chemicals firm. In his absence, he was voted out of the company, as he did not get along with the key players on the board. During his outplacement, he was coached on how to make things work better in his next job. In his new position, he put the lesson he learnt to good use - he made certain that whatever changes he wanted to make in his initial months was supported by all board members before he implemented them. It cost him a little extra time but it worked.

Be it sealing a business deal or networking to look for greener pastures, at the corporate level, your role as CEO should be strategic. Peer ahead into the future to ensure your organization stays on course while you are at the wheel and keeping your shareholders happy.

(Mr. Heng is managing director of NeXT Career Consulting. NeXT Career is the Asia Pacific partner of Arbora Global Career Partners, an international association of over 30 partners present globally. He is the author of "Jump Start your Career," a career management book published by Prentice Hall and now available at www.amazon.com and also at major bookstores in Manila. For more career information, visit www.nextcareer.net.)

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

'Should I get a doctoral degree?'

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I'VE BEEN reading and compiling all the articles in the People at Work section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. I have also attended some of the seminars conducted by your group in Manila. I find your group's ideas, views and suggestions to be very helpful in managing our training and consulting firm.

I'm already married and have one child. I plan to pursue an MBA degree through distance learning from a university in the United Kingdom. However, I'm quite hesitant for several reasons. One, our president/CEO suggested that I pursue a doctoral degree instead of an MBA. According to him, a doctoral degree will change my title, unlike an MBA. And I already have an MA in Industrial Relations. Two, I will spend almost half of my savings for the two-year program. I will be able to earn the total cost in three to four years with my present salary.

My plan is to be an independent international consultant in management and/or an entrepreneur. Should I pursue a doctoral degree or an MBA to prepare me for my chosen career? Is the MBA program worth pursuing despite the cost? Do international organizations/ companies prefer to hire applicants with a doctoral degree?

Aiming for Higher Education

You are right to desire to pursue higher studies, if you want to be an international consultant. There is nothing better than having a doctorate when you are in consulting. But remember that in consulting, it is also the track record of projects successfully completed that matter. It is a balance of experience and education. Recently, I read in a book that companies do not pay for knowledge but for the insight into knowledge. Insight is best acquired through experience.

If you want to see typical qualifications of international consultants, try to get a copy of "The Economist" magazine. It has interesting classified ads for consultants. You can also try applying with global non-governmental organizations like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank or the United Nations that have considerable number of consulting staff. Several successful Filipino consultants have taken this track.

Distance learning

The next question is how to get a doctorate. If it is expensive to acquire through distance learning, why not pursue your doctórate in a local university that has global affiliations and accreditation? Some of the more popular ones are UP, Ateneo, De La Salle, and UST among others.

I asked the opinion of my daughter who does business development for our company. She says that distance learning for degrees is still at an experimental stage. She suggests waiting two more years until they gain a level of stability. She cited an instance when a school in the US had to recall diplomas already issued. She subscribes to an online newsletter at *www.distanceeducator.com*. It gives a continuous update on the status of global distance education or learning. Do further research. If you are risk averse, then get your doctoral degree in local schools.

In you want to do distance learning, you must also ask how disciplined you are in terms of study habits. How capable are you of pursuing learning with a minimum of structures without face-to-face contact with a professor? You have to know yourself.

Ph.D.
₱
EEEP!
MBA

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Programs

Your other career track is to be an entrepreneur. This is quite different from international consulting. Successful entrepreneurs may not need a doctoral degree to be successful. Most of them graduate from the School of Hard Knocks.

An outstanding program for entrepreneurs, in case you want to get another masters degree, is the Masters in Entrepreneurship offered by the Asian Institute of Management. While it is true you have an MA in Industrial Relations and may therefore be good in managing people, you would need to know the core functions of managing an enterprise.

I hope this sheds light on your dilemma. Wishing you only the best in the New Year as you decide how and where to pursue higher education.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph or fax to 892-2902.)

How to get out of a sales slump

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I've always been one of the best salespeople in my company. But this year, I'm stuck in the middle of the pack. Any ideas on how to get out of a slump?

The Smile and the Shoeshine ain't Working

Years ago, I was walking down a street in Manhattan when a panhandler came ambling toward me. I was about to walk around him when he suddenly reached into his coat and pulled out a telephone. He put the receiver to his ear, talked animatedly for a moment, then handed the receiver to me. "It's Norway," he said, "for you." I laughed long and loud, told him to take a message, then handed the guy a five.

I'm sure I wasn't his first sale of the day-nor his last. But he managed to hold onto the three things it takes to stay on top in sales: attitude, opportunities and technique. His attitude was confident (he knew he was going to blow me away). He created opportunities where none existed (after all, I was about to walk away). And his technique was brilliant (a telephone call from Norway?).

To see how you stack up in those three areas, try asking yourself the following questions. They're adapted from a book called "Relationship Selling: The Key to Getting and Keeping Customers" by Jim Cathcart (Perigree, 1990).

How's your attitude? Have you lost confidence in yourself or your product? Nothing saps confidence like sagging sales, but customers smell blood in the water faster than sharks. So find ways to trick yourself into projecting confidence even when you're down. Letters from satisfied customers might help; so might developing hobbies away from work. Success off the job can be infectious.

Are you creating opportunities? Or are you coasting? When sales are strong, it's easy to let prospecting slide. Sounds like it might be time to burn some shoe leather. Are there groups of potential customers you haven't tapped? Competitors' customers you can hit? Think back to what you did in the early days and see if your own prospecting savvy can save you.

How's your technique? Have you become too creative-or not creative enough? It's easy, when you've been at it for a while, to offer the same old pitch to everyone. Stop giving the same generic sales pitch and start adapting your pitch to the specific problems of specific customers. If you're not solving their problems, you're wasting their time.

It's also a good idea to check in regularly with the people who have spurned you. Talking to your "rejects" might not seem conducive to boosting your spirits or your sales-but who can better tell you what went wrong?

Everyone gets a wake-up call from time to time and it sounds like this is yours. But if you rededicate yourself to doing the little things that got you to the top in the first place, you'll head off those scarier calls from Norway.

HELP!
QUOTA
BUY
SELL

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE BRAVO

(Mr. Rosner is the author of "The Boss's Survival Guide," McGraw Hill 2001, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning WorkingWounded.com and RetentionEvangelist.com. He is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com)

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LIFESTYLE
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2bU!
to be young • to be you • to be young • To be you!

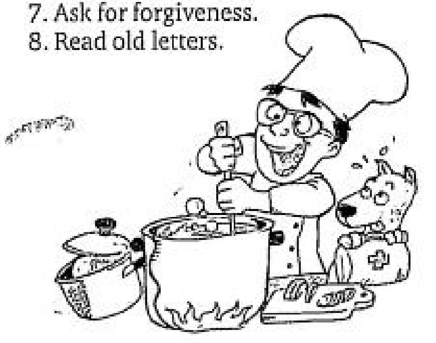
365 ways to be (totally, totally) you in 2003

You think 2002 went by fast? You couldn't be more right. Let 2bU! take you on an even faster roller-coaster ride through the people who made headlines, the parties that made your head spin, the music that you head-banged to, style and star turns, technological tantrums, sports sensations and personal raves on 2002 moments. Plus, the results of 2bU!'s annual best and worst list voted by you. And to speed things a little bit, we give you 365 "to dos" to jumpstart your 2003.

Get ready, readers. This is 2002 in a capsule. Now pop it.

By the 2bU! staff

1. Set realistic goals and work on achieving them.
2. Start the new year right by having a clean e-mail inbox. Delete the junk mail and save your old important e-mails into different folders.
3. Organize your room.
4. Clean out your closet. Take out the clothes that don't fit anymore/you'd never wear again/remind you too much of your ex, and give them to people who can make good use of them.
5. "Declutter" your soul. Let go of any trace of bitterness.
6. Forgive.
7. Ask for forgiveness.
8. Read old letters.



9. Learn how to cook.
10. Visit an old friend.
11. Travel. Go to a place you've always wanted to see.
12. Don't be too hard on yourself.
13. Take a break when you feel the need to.
14. Do not abuse your body.
15. Do not let others abuse you.
16. Don't abuse others.
17. Write to relatives who live far away. Let them know what's going on in your life.
18. Create a scrapbook of your life.
19. Think of searching for a gift as a way of showing another person just how much they mean to you.
20. Keep a journal.
21. Get a pet.
22. Reply to your unanswered e-mails.
23. Keep your promises.
24. Be prompt.
25. Don't text while you're out on a date.
26. Do not text while you're having a conversation with someone.
27. Live within your means.
28. Avoid compulsive buying.
29. Smile more frequently.

ILLUSTRATIONS ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

30. When on the verge of blowing up, take a deep breath and count to 10.
31. Avoid fights.
32. Be loyal to your friends.
33. Avoid gossip.
34. Reevaluate your priorities.
35. Dance in the rain.
36. Go on spur-of-the-moment nights out.
37. If you don't have anything nice to say, stay silent.
38. Visit your old school.
39. Have a long talk with your mom or dad.
40. Listen.
41. Learn to play the piano.
42. Watch a good concert.
43. Climb a mountain.
44. Do something out of the ordinary.

365 WAYS/ C2

PLDT IDD
Christmas
Balik Bayad

Regalo namin sa 'yo ngayong Pasko,
₱20 pag-umabot ng ₱100 ang IDD call mo.

PLDT IDD INTERNATIONAL DIRECT DIALING 40¢ A MINUTE

Sa PLDT IDD, malinaw na, mas makakatipid ka pa.

PLDT reserves the right to disqualify subscribers from availing of the promo offer if they violate existing PLDT policies on subscription, credit and collection and/or commit acts of fraud. Promo period is from Dec. 1, 2002 to Jan. 15, 2003. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2383. Series of 2002. See other print ad for details.

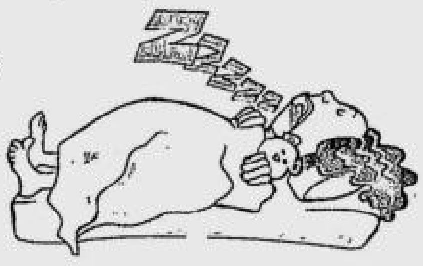
PLDT

365 ways to be (totally, totally) you in 2003

From page C1

45. Get a new hairstyle.
46. Go to the spa and let yourself be pampered.
47. Try to do at least one nice thing for someone every single day.
48. Pray.
49. Read good books.
50. If you're computer illiterate, try to learn the wonders of the Internet.
51. Take up a sport.
52. Go to the gym.
53. Get together with your high school friends.
54. Eat ice cream while watching TV.
55. If you feel like having a good cry, do so. Tears are cleansing.
56. Keep a diary of your dreams.
57. Ask your parents to tell you their love story.
58. Create something you'll be proud of. Maybe a poem, a painting, a song or a cross-stitch project.
59. Keep yourself young by spending time with children—not the Michael Jackson way, of course.
60. Be willing to laugh at yourself.
61. Balance work and play.
62. Discover new places to eat and recommend good ones to friends.
63. Watch cartoons.
64. Keep an open mind.
65. Back-stabbing is always a no-no.
66. Do not let fear hold you back.
67. Fall in love.
68. Do not let mistakes bog you down. Learn from them instead.
69. Put yourself in the shoes of someone else.
70. Jealousy is a monster you must kill.
71. Make other people smile.
72. Laugh with others, not at them.
73. Express your appreciation for the people around you.
74. Work on losing the pounds you've always wanted to lose.
75. Lose weight for yourself, not for anyone else.
76. Moderation is key to everything.
77. Value what you have.
78. Surprise someone.
79. Do everything with zeal, never half-heartedly.
80. Go to a museum.
81. Visit places that bring back good childhood memories.
82. Throw a party.
83. Listen to good music.
84. Quit a nasty habit.
85. Ask your grandmother to tell you stories of her childhood.
86. Look through your family photographs.
87. Redecorate your room.
88. Make an effort to greet people on their birthdays.
89. Stop comparing yourself to others.
90. Help the postal system by sending snail mail once in a while.
91. For once, just say no.
92. Spend a day in an orphanage.
93. Get a really good massage.
94. Join civic/community organizations. You don't have to be a politician to make a difference.
95. Believe that your problems aren't setbacks but are opportunities.
96. Instead of looking for the perfect mate, devote time to making yourself even more perfect.
97. Give at least three hugs a day. It's good for the heart.
98. Go to a *manghuhula* just for kicks.
99. Go to a videoke and sing your lungs out.
100. Get a body scrub.
101. Sew all your missing buttons.
102. Have your teeth cleaned.
103. Arrange your photographs in albums.
104. Face the mirror and say, "This is going to be the best day of my life."
105. Live every day as if it were your last.
106. Be generous with your "I love you's." You wouldn't want to regret not saying it when it's too late.
107. Keep track of the things you lend out—CDs, books, VCDs—by creating a record in your PC.
108. Organize your files in your computer.
109. Get a gift for someone for no reason at all.
110. Eat cotton candy.
111. Spitting on the sidewalk isn't only unhygienic, it's disgusting.
112. When in a public place, keep your mobile phones on vibrate mode—for reasons of safety and etiquette.
113. A good perfume or cologne makes a big difference.
114. If you find a mobile phone, return it for good karma.
115. Learn a new language.
116. Stay away from the microwave and cook popcorn the traditional way.
117. Plant a tree.

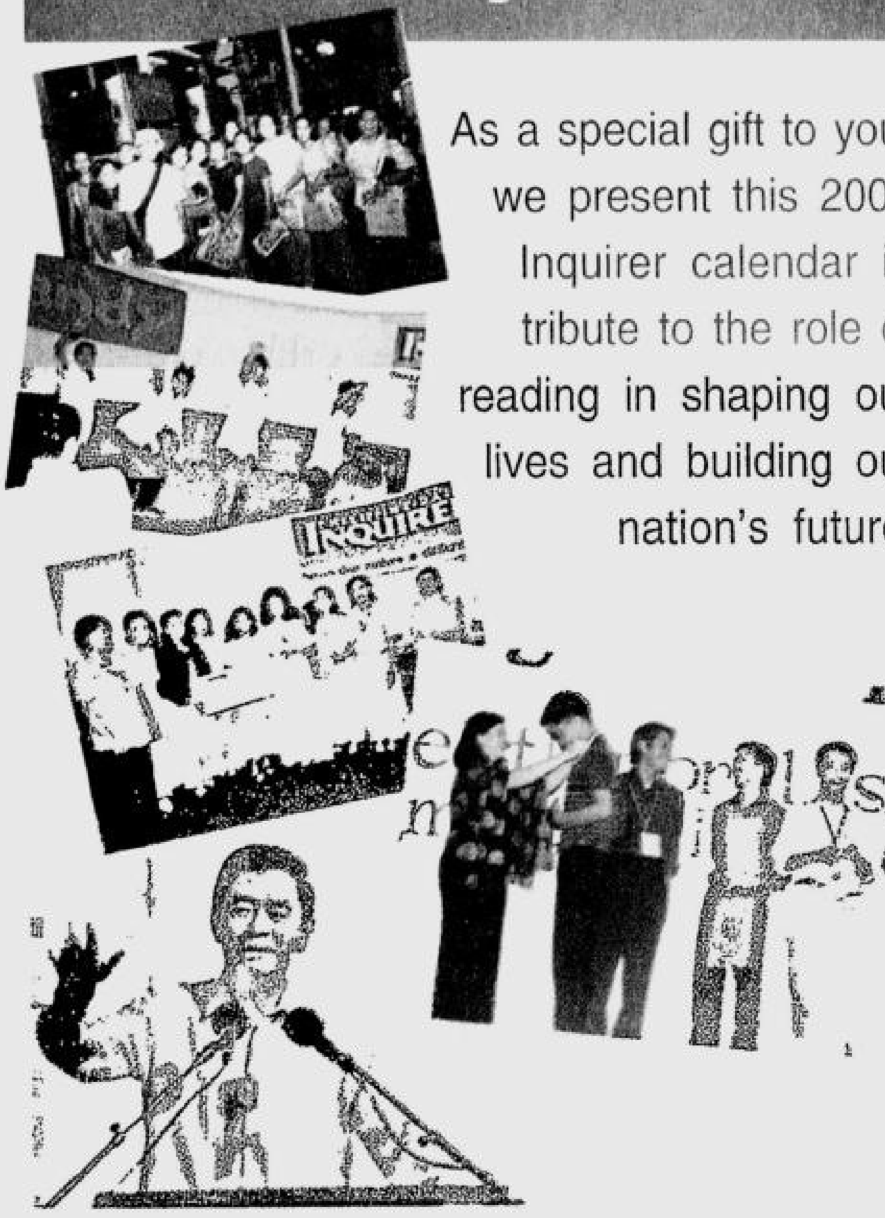
118. Reunite with a teacher who had a strong influence on you.
119. Take pictures of people you meet.
120. Keep an aquarium.
121. Keep yourself updated on current events.
122. Make a sandwich or two and give it to a street child.
123. Go to bed early and enjoy a good snooze.
124. Don't be afraid to make a fool of yourself.
125. Learn to dance.
126. Go somewhere on your bike.
127. Go out on dates.
128. Change your hair color.
129. Buy Christmas gifts earlier.
130. Learn a song in a foreign language.
131. Learn to swim.
132. Play DJ with your CDs in your own room.
133. Learn to rap.
134. Read books by Filipino authors.
135. Go to the market.
136. Say sorry to the kid you bullied in grade school.
137. Teach a kid how to read.
138. Offer to babysit your niece or nephew.
139. Drive someone around.
140. Start your own garden.
141. Do something that scares you.
142. Wear audacious underwear.
143. Buy nice sheets for your bed.
144. Clean your bathroom.
145. Give a hefty tip.
146. Sleep over a friend's house.
147. Have a movie marathon of your favorite movies.
148. Be on time.
149. Save a portion of your earnings in the bank.
150. Take someone out for lunch.
151. Bake cookies and bring them to school or the office.
152. Get a manicure and pedicure.
153. Buy new shoes.
154. Get a foot spa treatment.
155. Clean your refrigerator.
156. Make a grocery list and stick to it.
157. Go to a comedy club.
158. Visit your parish priest.
159. Kiss someone (not the priest, please).
160. Watch a movie with a good friend.
161. Make a wish and make it come true.
162. Ride a jeep and let it take you where it goes.
163. Go out wearing your comfy pajama bottoms.
164. Visit relatives abroad.
165. Chat.
166. Scan and e-mail your family photos to relatives who are far away.
167. Block nasty spammers.
168. Learn to eat a vegetable you've always hated.
169. Take a long walk.
170. Compliment someone.
171. Smile at a stranger.
172. Order something you've never tried before.
173. Draw a self-portrait.
174. Put up a corkboard on your bedroom wall and fill it with memories.
175. Make a scrapbook.
176. Buy a world map and mark all the countries you want to go to.
177. Go to the arcade and play your heart out.
178. Have drinks with old friends.
179. Introduce one friend to another.
180. Go to a corner of the city that you've never explored before.
181. Order something you saw on TV.
182. Give notes of appreciation to your loved ones.
183. Play *patintero*.
184. Visit the Filipiniana section of your favorite department store and marvel at the numerous representations of Filipino life.
185. Eat fishballs.
186. Stay out all night.
187. Join a radio phone-in contest.
188. Write to the person you idolize.
189. Bake a cake for your neighbor.
190. Remember people's names.
191. Write to the President of the Philippines.
192. Watch a documentary.
193. Listen to a different music genre.
194. Segregate your trash.
195. Volunteer to wash the dishes.
196. Call an old flame.
197. Sing while taking a bath.
198. Go to Quiapo.
199. Buy an original CD.
200. Utilize time in traffic wisely.
201. Buy a coloring book and crayons and use them as therapy.
202. Knit.
203. Tie-dye a shirt.
204. Dance in your room.
205. Make your own music video.
206. Eat out alone.
207. Bring flowers to the grave of a loved one.
208. Join the lottery.
209. Read even just one volume of your encyclopedia.
210. Read books that you loved as a child.
211. Make friendship bracelets and pass them out to friends.
212. Learn to play the guitar.
213. Keep a box of really good chocolates in your fridge for emergency purposes.
214. Create a wish list. Write down all the things you want.
215. Send someone a Christmas card months before the holidays. That's good for a laugh.
216. Make one night of the week your pampering night. Slap on the face masks, massage your feet with invigorating foot scrubs and moisturize, moisturize, moisturize.
217. Watch a stupid movie and laugh your head off.
218. Go for a long drive.
219. Spend a lazy day in bed.
220. Pretend you're seeing your own city for the first time.
221. Pay attention to things you've started to take for granted.
222. Give your helper the day off and take care of the household chores.
223. Bring home a stray cat or dog.
224. Join a game show.
225. Order a wedding cake and eat it with friends.
226. Ask your parents for stories about your antics as a crazy child.
227. One is never too old to keep a piggy bank.
228. Stare at yourself in the mirror and memorize every detail of your face—every line, every mole.
229. Give someone flowers.
230. Remember the book the professor assigned for you to work on and how you faked your way to making him believe you read it when you didn't? Read it now.
231. Have a great adventure with your friends.
232. Fill your room with balloons.
233. Shave your head.
234. Wear something you usually wouldn't wear.
235. Make someone laugh.
236. Offer to help carry someone's things.
237. Hold a door open for someone.
238. Clean out your drawers.
239. Watch the news.
240. Beat the blues by getting regular exercise. Exercise produces endorphins for your body.



241. Get enough sleep. Your body will thank you for it.
242. Start your own collection. It may be as mundane as collecting stamps or as strange as collecting plastic spoons of every McDonald's branch you have been to.
243. Stop putting off things tomorrow that you can do today. Procrastinating is a tough habit to break, but not impossible.
244. Get to know your boyfriend/girlfriend's friends.
245. Do not waste energy on hatred and anger.
246. If you say you're going to call, call.
247. List down all the things you've learned from your previous relationships and give the list to a younger sibling so he/she can learn from your mistakes.
248. Set up a blind date for your friends.

365 WAYS/ C8

Happy 2003 to all Inquirer readers!



As a special gift to you, we present this 2003 Inquirer calendar in tribute to the role of reading in shaping our lives and building our nation's future.

The Inquirer is proud to have spearheaded various activities, including a youth readership program, to promote reading in the country. This year, we invite you to be a part of our efforts to develop a more involved and discerning citizenry.

The Inquirer Seminar Series enables the youth to interact with select experts and celebrities. Participants leave the event with a clearer vision of how they can contribute to positive change.

The Inquirer Inter-Collegiate Debating Championship aims to empower the youth by promoting reading and critical thinking through the art of debate.

A joint campaign with Adarna House, Candy Magazine, MTV Ink and Filipinas Heritage Library, the Teens Read Too campaign develops a wholistic perspective of reading among teens through various competitions and campaigns.

To get an idea of what goes on behind the newspaper, students are invited to visit the Inquirer for a special tour that may be tailored to fit their needs.

In support of Visine's Read to Lead campaign and in cooperation with National Book Store, Inquirer's Look Who's Reading contest awards photo entries that best show reading as the most affordable and effortless way to gain knowledge and be entertained -- done by anyone, anywhere.

For more information, please contact:
Corporate Relations Office at 897-8808 locals 238 or 209

KINDLY TURN THE PAGE TO SEE YOUR SPECIAL 2003 INQUIRER CALENDAR

IT GIRL COMETH. Joey Mead is back.

DJ DELIGHT. Paul Van Dyk off hours

THE FUN LIFE. Faith Lavarro, promoter

CHICANE. Your right dose of C.

SHANNEN invites you to Greenbelt.

R&B RENAISSANCE. DJ Steve Mills raises the roof at Pravda and Wasabi. At right, club and bar kings Marcel Crespo and DJ Montano at the Wherelse pajama party

Night watch, morning after

Tim Yap

As youths of this generation looking up to the ones that went before us, all of a sudden we found nothing to rebel against. Instead of trying to change the system—the government, our family, our community—we tried to change ourselves. "Generation Me" began to explore the depths of its soul. Equipped with the latest gadgets and technology, ours became a breed of new idealists who valued equilibrium—we worked hard, and we played hard.

The year 2002 in the party scene had nocturnal urbanites doing a double time take on everything—like a speed trip that doesn't know when to stop. Partyphiles had to hop from the opening of white hot bar **Acquario** then head off to happening expat heaven **Havana** or drop by **Dish** for a group boitday shebang. The vicinity of **V** has always been very busy, never mind if **Nuvo** is already in next door Greenbelt, along with **Restaurant 12** and the 1001 hipspots slash something something that opened within Ayala's latest mall opus for the hip, young partyphile.

WHIP IT. Whip it good. Good girl with bad habits

While techno and house beats still pumped, R&B reigned and chill/ lounge music lorded over bars and clubs. **Pravda's** Wednesdays is still tops with the AB R&B scenesters, with **Wherelse** and **Wasabi** packing it in as well, with the latter filling up the whole strip of Makati Ave. from here till eternity, with sweat glands at its most active. **Steve Mills** is to be blamed for the R&B renaissance in Manila, plus all the radio stations, MTV, MYX and other conniving music meisters. Wherelse's Friday chill pill still has the hipster's seal of approval, plus of course, wherever pied piper and pioneer **Anton Ramos** brought his "The Chillout Project." Controversial club **Orange** lost its juice for a time, but got born again with **Olive**, with rejuvenated interiors (by **Junie Rodriguez**) and new partners.

Scene favorites **Big Fish** and **NBK** were neck-to-neck in friendly competition bringing in one big DJ after another, hurling an accusation at each other, busy out flyering, out e-mailing and out promoting the other. The winner—all of us. Thanks guys, for all the wonderful parties this year. Keep it up.

Red letter dates came in the form of gigantic, never-miss-it-for-the-world events, from costume balls to product launches to raves that reqtired revelers to switch and swap. Each glossy mag had their banner events from trend tours to bachelor's bashes. From the latest Nokia phone to the arrival of MAC and Shu Uemura to the introduction of so-and-so "it girl" as endorser—it was capped with a kick-ass party.

And why not? Marketing ploy and celebrity posers aside, parties fulfill that need within us (and let me borrow some telecom slogan) "to be connected." This was a year of tragi-comedy (more tragic than funny, really) so the more people we can share moments and ponder on life on, the better. I am forever plagued by questions like "Do you ever get tired of partying?" or "What is it about parties?"

Alexandra Shulman gave me the answer when she wrote in her Vogue party issue editorial, "You make a friend, meet a lover, have a spectacular row, cry on the bathroom landing, change the future of the world in the kitchen, watch the sun rise or dance under the moon." And may I add, break in your new pair of shoes, experiment with an outfit, run into former lovers, get high on people's energy, escape the emptiness of daily living and fill it up with high-spirited soul searching.

This year has been a whirlwind of defiance of anything monotonous, from color-coding to fun-tasia, Tali and Boracay beach escapes and sexy bar-and-partner-hopping escapades.

2002 saw the deconstruction of the attire request—from crazy casual to funky formal, **Tessa Prieto Valdes**' closet of wigs, boas and sequined sets have never been this in-demand.

2002 was the year of birthday bashes and society bashing. From blind items to e-mail responses to blog entries, more people seemed to hate each other, which spiced up cocktail conversations and dinner chitter chatter. You were either called a "social climber," "b--ch," "sl-t" and other four letter words plus "er"—such is the downside of Manila society—young and old. To those who propagate this preposterous propaganda, I pray for (as Miss Congeniality put it) "world peace."

IT'S GETTIN' hot in here, so take off all your clothes... Shadow dance til ya drop

Top 10 of the year

Amid the razzle dazzle of mega brands and their endorsers, of society hook ups and breakups (there have been a lot, especially this season, which is kinda weird, don't you think?), here is a random list of the year's top 10 events that rocked the scene (of ones that I went to at least—and God knows I've been through a lot, literally and otherwise.)

CHEERS, PARTYPHILES! The best parties are sprinkled with a lot of surprises, seduction and soul. Happy New Year!

ENDORSERS GALORE. F&H's Dean Hinkley, Raya Mananquil and Brian Tan with owner Ronald Pineda, stylist Chechel Joson and Alan Vianzon

COYOTE BEAUTIES. Fiery bars sprouting all over the city with daring women in states of undress

Chicane

It was music heaven. After hearing **Nick Bracegirdle** in movies, shows and videos, what was once a party promoter's dream, all of a sudden became a reality. "It's cinematic house music performed live—like experiencing a soundtrack right in front of your very eyes, playing with all five of our senses!" to quote scenester and Shu Uemura's sassy **Tina Tinio**.

Sasha

After countless DJ delays and cancellations, the great **Sasha** reached our shores and played an arguably good set. This Gen-txt year-ender party had a fab turnout and fantastic music by **Manolet Dario**, who saved the day—proving that our local DJs are as good, if not better than their foreign counterparts.

Space Ibiza

The party capital's most famed, most decadent club comes to Manila to teach us a thing or two about party popping, with *tres señoritas* from Ibiza dancing till their boobs drop and hungry ravers punting and gumming the night away.

Paul Van Dyk

"I miss this underground feel," said DJ **Robby Mananquil** of this party at the 37th floor of the Enterprise Center. Anyone who was there felt Van Dyk's energetic, pulsating, palpable beats. The party had no sponsors, so no big tacky banners trying to sell something. It was a breath of fresh air.

The Tatler Ball

A gathering of high (hi!) society A to Z. Controversial from its GMA cover to the party list invitations to the ladies who dressed to the nines and tens, bling-blings and all. To top it off, man of the year **Bert Romulo** donated his prize to charity. The young set was led by **KC Concepcion**, **Stephanie Zubiri** and other pretty, young somethings.

Preview New Society Ball

"It's about time for the new meritocracy," said editor in chief **Pauline Suaco** for the coming of age of self-made achievers who didn't bank on their parents' last names to make something out of themselves. To add further spice, guests responded to the call of "funky formal" to the hilt—so hip it hurts. Ouch.

G SPOTTED. Celebrity bartending by G Tongi at Dish

ROLE REVERSAL. Now, it's the men who strip. Carlo Adorador at the Cosmo bachelor bash

Rex Navarrete anywhere

The Pinoy phenomenon of the year, for making us laugh, and at the same time, get to know ourselves better through his self-deprecating humor. Everywhere he went, from the Chalk anniversary to the Green Planet gigs to the Greenbelt Comedy clubs, the crowds followed. Because of him, Sto. Niño is hip again.

FAD show (Fashion, Art and Design)

"Not Enough Circuses," some industry mavericks lamented. So FAD was born to give young design talent a chance to shine—and they did, in a most innovative way. Each night, **Ariel Lozada**, **Michael Salientes** and **Yodel Pe** transformed the Tent into a showcase of young Pinoy art and heart. I take my hats off to you guys for this fab couture de force.

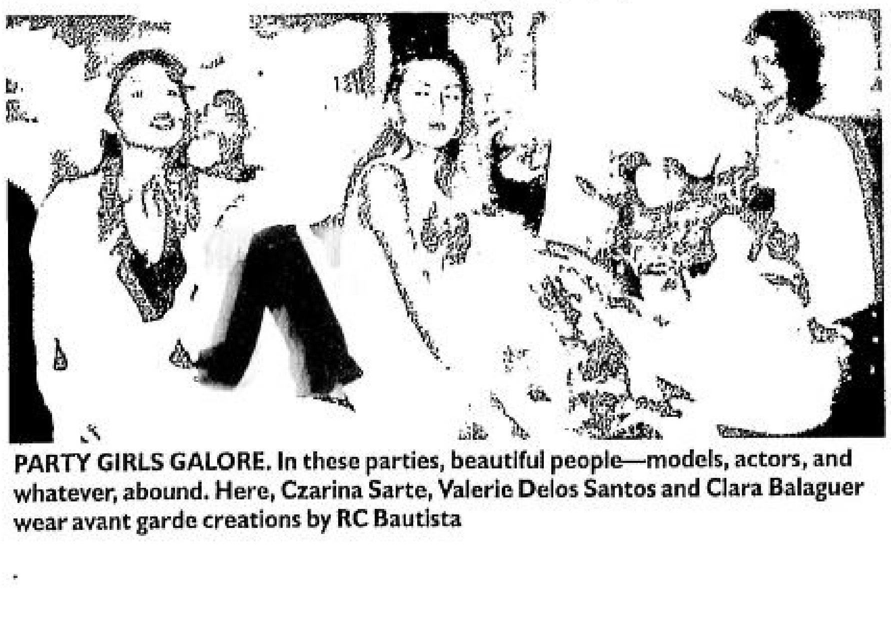
Coke Light launch

A world of white, white, white. "Clockwork Orange" with a fab cast of coke-y characters. From the labyrinth to the stadium to the show, **Robby Carmona** was at his creative peak. Fresh, fresh, fresh.

Bench "One Night Only"

A lot of skin. Star-studded skin. Unprecedented hype with matching high standard sales. Satiated the Pinoy thirst for hunks and babes. Inspired me to work out. Doubled the feat in Cebu. Now can anyone beat that?

May the first day of this year inspire you to do good, be better and give your best. Have a great one, partyphiles!


PARTY GIRLS GALORE. In these parties, beautiful people—models, actors, and whatever, abound. Here, Czarina Sarte, Valerie Delos Santos and Clara Balaguer wear avant garde creations by RC Bautista

ENTER NEW SOCIETY. In funky formals, members of Preview's roster of achievers pose for a souvenir batch of 2002 photo

LOOK WHO'S READING

The Look Who's Reading Photo Contest is a project of the Philippine Daily Inquirer launched October 2002. For 10 weeks, amateur photographers sent in photos of people reading newspapers, books and magazines in ways encouraging others to start reading themselves. Hoping to inspire more people to read, we present the winning entries with the respective names of the photographers in this year's calendar special.

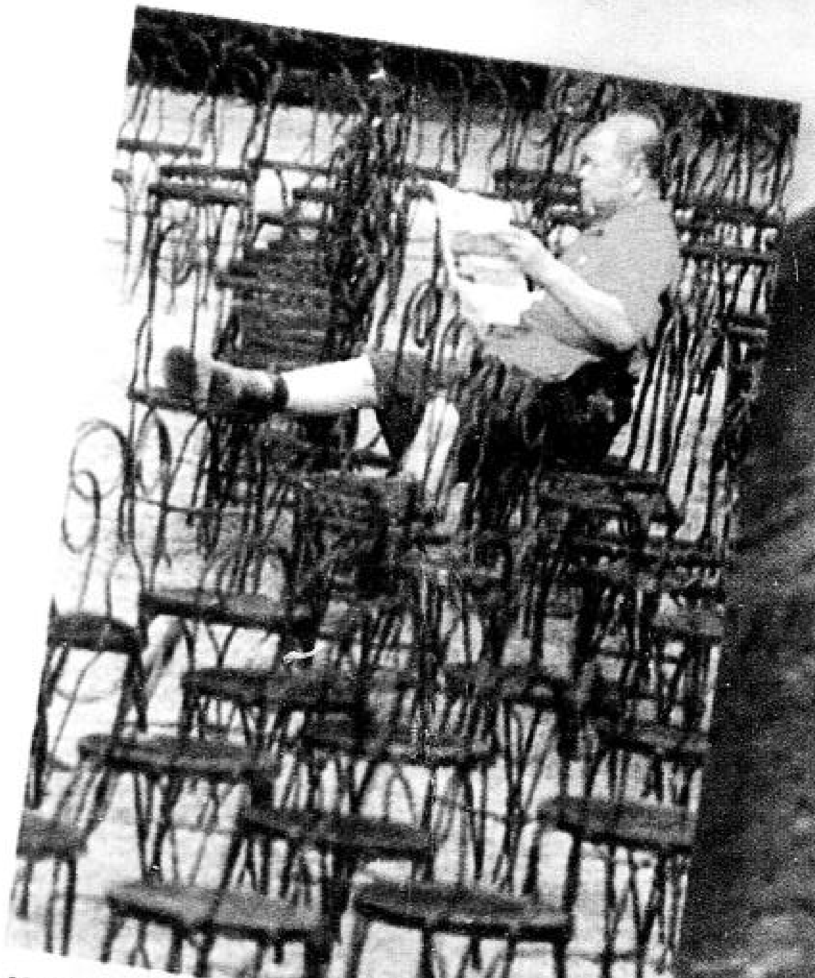
The Dodo Is Dead
Children's Encyclopedia
Countries Fly Flags
2002

ANGEL AT EIGHT MONTHS OLD

AGNES ALPAPARA, 44
Nutritionist and Dietitian
DSWD in Buragwis, Legazpi City.
Winner, Oct. 21, 2002

CHILDREN'S HOUR

CARLOS GARCIA, 38,
Readata Enterprises.
Winner, Dec. 9, 2002



MAN ALONE

MA. CATALINA JUMPAY, 20

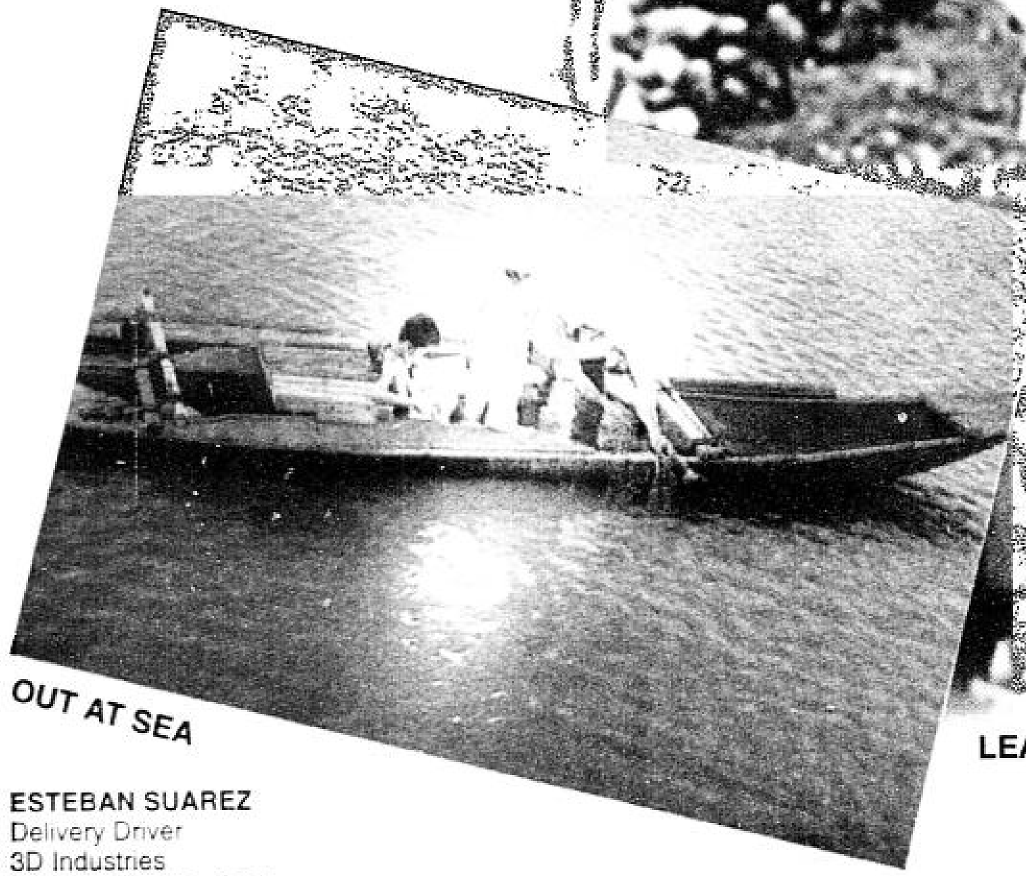
THREE BOYS TAKE 5

PEPITO FRIAS, 52,
Training Officer
Philippine Human Rights Information Center
Winner, Nov. 25, 2002

MA. CATALINA JUMPAY, 3
Certified Public Accountant
Universal Leisure
Winner, Dec. 23, 2002

BLIND GIRL

RAMON CASTILLO, 42
Licensed Electrical Engineer
Innovatronix Inc.
Winner, Oct. 28, 2002



OUT AT SEA

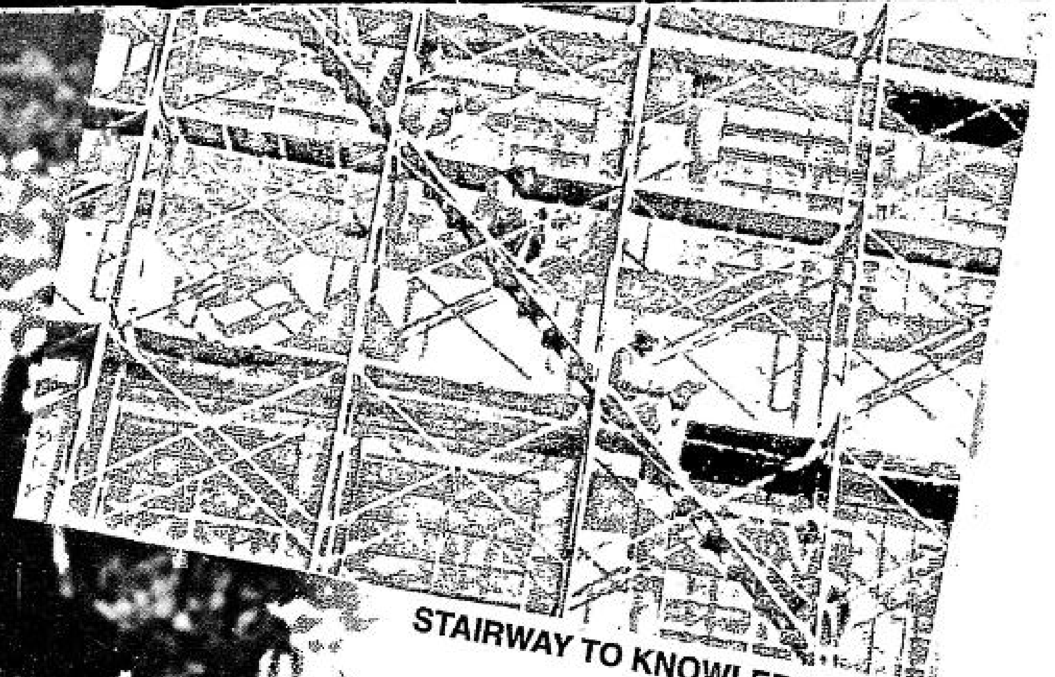
ESTEBAN SUAREZ
Delivery Driver
3D Industries
Winner, Dec. 16, 2002

LEARNING AMONG THE RUBBLE

MARICAR B. MANATA, 22
Medical Records Encoder
Barrameda Medical Clinic
Winner, Nov. 4, 2002

HIGH ON A DUMPSITE

JOSE CLARAVALL, 52
Vice President Area Head
United Coconut Planters Bank
Winner, Nov. 11, 2002



STAIRWAY TO KNOWLEDGE

JEREIL SOLIVIO, 34,
DM Consunji, Inc.
Winner, Dec. 2, 2002

BRIDGING THE GAP

PAUL ORTALIZ, 24,
BSBA Student,
AMACC Iloilo.
Winner, Nov. 18, 2002

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER CALENDAR 2003

January

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July

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May

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June

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29	30												

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November

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December

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER METRO
STOCK MARKET *Quarterly*
BUSINESS BANKING REPORT *Quarterly*
SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER BUSINESS *Monday*
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER *Saturday* SPECIAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS The Widest Reaching Classifieds
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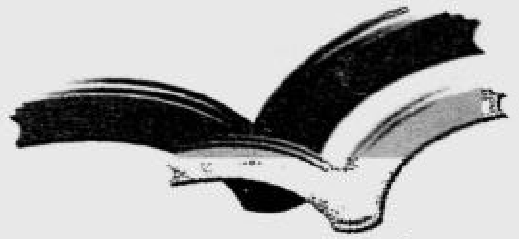

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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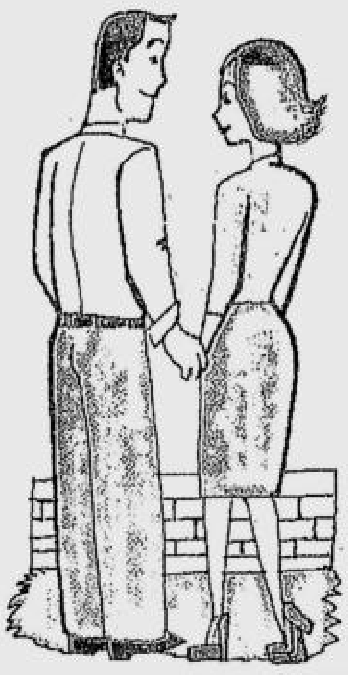
365 ways to be (totally, totally) you in 2003

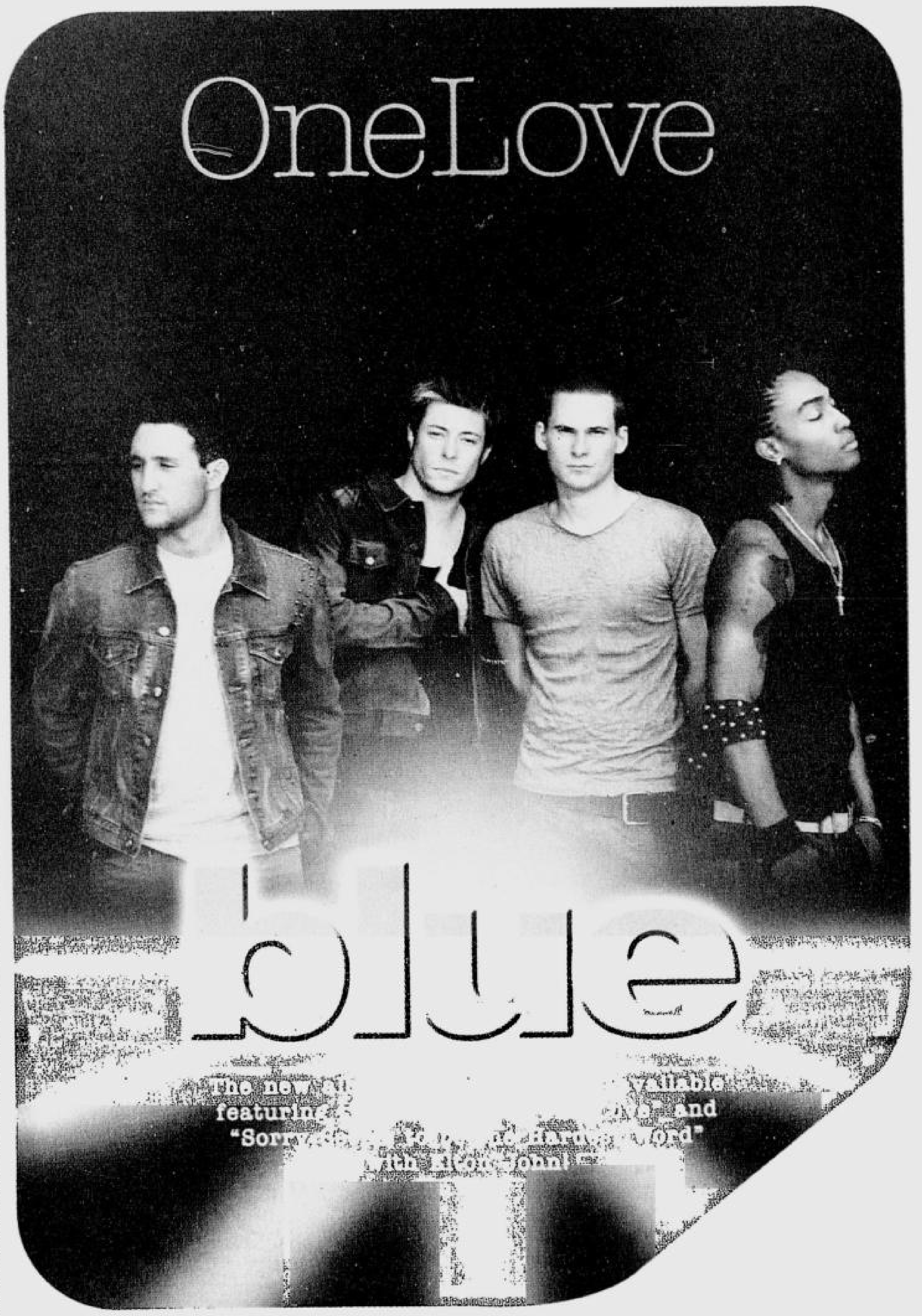
From page C2

249. Rent your favorite movie as a child and watch it.
250. Go to museums and galleries to enhance your appreciation for life and art.
251. Rearrange your furniture.
252. Tuck a loved one into bed, pull up the covers up to his/her chin and make sure his/her pillows are nice and fluffy.
253. Buy a punching bag and take your frustrations out on it.
254. Discover the wonders of GPRS.
255. List down your visions of a perfect day and turn it into reality.
256. Watch a band perform live.
257. Sleep naked.
258. Talk to your plants.
259. Have an ice cream feast with your friends.
260. Take up yoga.
261. Repaint your bedroom.
262. Immortalize yourself by creating your own crazy concoction of a cocktail.
263. Have a sleepover for your friends. No one is too old for slumber parties.
264. Eat dessert first.
265. Use a condom.
266. If you're a man, wear silk panties, if you're a girl, wear briefs.
267. Look in the mirror and choose your best smile.
268. Drink milk.
269. Bite your fingernails.
270. Rent a hotel room in your own city and bask in the luxury of being alone.
271. Watch the sun set.
272. Watch the sun rise.
273. Take photos of yourself using your camera's self-timer.
274. Cook an elaborate dinner for yourself.
275. Self-pity is for the dogs.
276. Wear something sexy.
277. Suck on a lollipop.



278. Make this year's Valentine's Day one to be remembered forever.
279. Do something crazy—skydive or bungee jump.
280. Wear the same shirt for three days straight.
281. Buy a book for someone you love.
282. Help save a relationship.
283. Answer all phone calls.
284. Do not text for a day.
285. Read a famous person's biography and learn from his/her life.
286. Spend hours in the tub.
287. Get your face painted.
288. Attend three parties in one night.
289. Bring a notebook with you at all times.
290. Be vocal about your views.
291. Eat gum and blow large bubbles.
292. Surprise one of your favorite people with his/her favorite food.
293. Play therapist to a friend.
294. Put together a medicine kit for someone you love.
295. Call an old friend and catch up.
296. Buy sexy shoes for your sexy feet.
297. Have a deep conversation with a friend.
298. Write down your idea of a perfect funeral and give it to someone you trust.
299. Disappear for the weekend.
300. Dress like Tessa Prieto-Valdes.
301. Buy nice underwear for yourself.
302. Lock your doors, turn your answering machine on, your mobile phone off, don't watch TV or read books. Just focus on no one but you, maybe write in your journal and just get in touch with your inner self again.
303. Propose marriage to someone.
304. Stop making excuses.
305. Realize that being alone isn't synonymous with being lonely.
306. Wear a costume to the office.
307. Forget underwear just for a day.
308. Eat nothing but fruits.
309. Put up your Christmas tree five months early.
310. Watch a TV show in a foreign language and make up your own dialogue.
311. Play "guess which TV commercial is next" with your family.
312. Drink a bottle of beer with your dinner.
313. Defy your high school stereotype.
314. Look up your childhood sweetheart just to see how much he or she has changed.
315. Dress up this Halloween.
316. Practice saying the alphabet backwards.
317. Play charades with friends.
318. Have a traditional Filipino children's party complete with *pabitin*, *palayok*, sweet spaghetti and hotdogs with marshmallows no matter how old you are.
319. List down quotes that strike you in a notebook.
320. Wear thongs.
321. Enroll in a class just because.
322. Watch a scary movie with the lights off.
323. Walk around your house blindfolded to help you appreciate your gift of sight.
324. Sing a silly song.
325. If you're talkative, stay silent. If you're always silent, try being talkative.
326. Sing in one of those videoke stalls in the malls.
327. Arrange your books alphabetically.
328. Look at your yearbook again.
329. Mend broken friendships.
330. List down the things that make you happy.
331. Talk to a foreigner online and brag about the Philippines.
332. Have a fling.
333. Give away your old toys.
334. Reread old magazines.
335. Use photographs of things and people you love as wallpaper.

336. Go skinny-dipping.
337. Swim at four in the morning.
338. Go on a road trip with friends.
339. Eat something you swore you'd never eat.
340. Make a list of the things you are grateful for.
341. Let a friend cry on your shoulder.
342. Record your thoughts on tape.
343. Play with bubblewrap.
344. Join a retreat.
345. Go to the beach, sit quietly and listen to the sound of crashing waves.
346. Write poetry. Who cares if it's bad?
347. Do not tell a single white lie for at least 24 hours.
348. Tell someone he/she smells good (But make sure it's true.)
349. Get a hot oil treatment.
350. Go to the doctor for a full check-up.
351. Reminisce about your crazy antics as a kid with your cousins.
352. Make a videotape of a day in your life
353. Write a long letter to a loved one.
354. Create your own website.
355. Set your alarm earlier than usual and then enjoy hitting the snooze button again and again and again.
356. Purge any trace of bitterness inside you.
357. Pay off all your debts.
358. Leave your cell phone at home for a day
359. Audition for a play just for the sake of doing it.
360. Find someone you can tell all your secrets to.
361. Be patient with the people around you.
362. Learn how to juggle.
363. Let go of all your pain.
364. Make a will. Who will you leave your CDs to? Your pillows? Your books? Your beloved earrings?
365. Count your blessings.



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What was the best thing that happened to you in 2002?

HOME at Last!

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH

By Pam Pastor

WE find it so easy to wave off one year after another. *"Ang bilis ng panahon, parang walang nangyari,"* we always say on New Year, seemingly forgetting that people, events and experiences had filled up every single one of the 365 days of the previous year.

Here, 100 people from all corners of society reveal their greatest moments in 2002. The answers mirror the things they hold dear—from family and friends to career, spirituality and self-growth.

This is to celebrate not only the year that has just passed, but the human spirit as well.

What was the best thing that happened to you in 2002?

1. When my friends visited me in the hospital after I broke my arm. Most especially when my girlfriend Catherine cut class just to take care of me. They made it special.—**Michael Vargas, 20**

2. It's a tie between a) publishing our book which is turning out to be another success; and b) getting engaged... sorta. Yikes! Don't let my mom read this.—**Jules, 25**

3. Rediscovering Jesus through the Victory Church in Alabang.—**Lui, 22**

4. Being legally female at last. On Dec. 26, I finally received a court order correcting my gender in my birth certificate. Now I can get my long overdue passport.—**Gobleth Moulic, 27**

5. *Dininig ko na ang bulong ng puso ko. Ngayon, nasa* cloud nine *na ako.* Natural high, *pare.*—**Pan D. Coco, 21**

6. I decided to leave for Sydney for half a year to learn to surf, drink lots of beer and write about the Philippines in a creative writing class.—**Natalia Diaz, 24**

7. Ina was the best thing that happened to me this year and in my whole life so far. We were together for two months, from May to June. No experience or event comes close.—**Allen Samson, 22**

8. Fulfilling my dream to come to Manila with my twins.— **Me**

9. I went back to school for the summer and enjoyed a range of classes purely for enjoyment, with no expectation of the benefits.—**Jonjon Rufino, 28**

10. Arriving in Manila from Rome after all the hassles and two years of preparation.—**Bely**

11. Paid off major debts, setting up my video editing PC, traveled the country a lot, passed a certification exam and received a pre-Christmas kiss.—**Qpid, 24**

12. I found my very own shipwreck somewhere in Subic. Some of its parts were lying on the beach among numerous rocks. They must have been there for a long time because seashells were growing on them.—**Ruth, 21**

13. Living in a condo for free.—**Linda**

14. Finally finding the one.—**Rosa, 25**

15. Visiting Singapore for the first time. I was doing what I had always dreamed of for years: exploring on my own and learning things about a culture on a firsthand basis. The visit also made me proud to be an Asian.—**Anne Rose Elicaño, 19**

16. I discovered Lifestyle Network's "Hot Off the Grill" and its amazing host, Bobby Flay.—**Mark Sablan, 22**

17. I went to the Philippines with my daughter Erika and my mom to see our family and friends.—**Nona, 24**

18. Graduated by the skin of my teeth.—**Manuel**

19. The Ateneo issue. It was hard to put everything together, but we had so much fun doing it. It was worth all the sweat, tears and credits.—**Angela Ignacio, 19**

20. Our Wednesday group *barkada*.—**Mich Dulce, 21**

21. Graduating from high school.—**Tammy, 19, UA&P**

22. When I became the national champion of the Nokia Speed Text Challenge.—**Pow, 17**

23. My parents became more lax with their rules when I turned 20.—**Leidy, 20**

24. 2002 was my passport to gaining new friends in the ICA debate team and gaining weight for the better.—**Maureen Tañedo, 17**

25. Graduating on time and getting an opportunity to work for a very reputable company.—**Vera de la Trinidad, 20**

26. This December, my aunts and cousins came home for the holidays after many years. Since their arrival, we've been having a blast. I think what's great about it is we're old enough to remember and appreciate these special times and young enough to enjoy every moment that we spend together.—**Felice, 19**

27. My two sisters gave birth a month apart, and now, for the first time, I'm an aunt to a beautiful niece and a nephew.—**Charley, 25**

28. My first major exhibit: "Sense and Sensitivity"—**Jef Samonte, 23, artist**

29. Getting engaged! Yahoo!—**Erwin**

WHAT WAS/ D2

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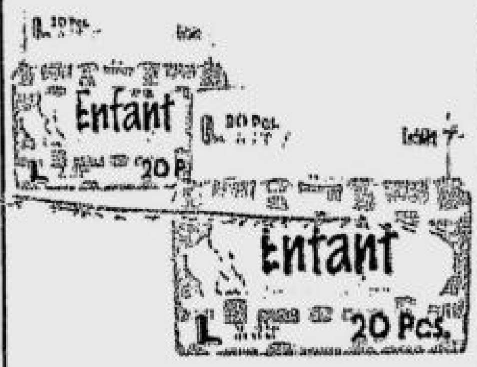

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ONLY FROM SMART, THE LEADER IN MOBILE E-COMMERCE

What was the best thing that happened to you in 2002?

From page D1

30. I grew closer to God in 2002.—**Gareth, 20**

31. The gigs with the Lotus Eaters and China Crisis. Grew up idolizing them so you could imagine the thrill I got playing the keyboards and singing backup for both bands. Can I die?—**Rico Blanco**

32. All the bad stuff that happened helped me realize what I was really meant to do and where I really fit in.—**Kit, 23**

33. An angel came down for me. She's not an ordinary girl. She's God-sent to inspire me to move on. We share a special kind of friendship that not even jealousy can corrupt. She's a friend, a sister, a significant other.—**Gelo, 26**

34. When my younger sister came back from California after six years.—**Kate Salazar, 22**

35. Initially I would say that the best thing that happened to me in 2002 was getting the hosting gig on GMA 7's "Unang Hirit." But through the course of the last six months, I have realized that it isn't just the fact that I'm earning more, but it's also the great new friends I've made from the production staff, crew and, of course, the best morning show cohosts anyone could ever ask for. It's what drives me every morning!—**TJ Manotoc**

36. In between being confined in hospitals and endless nights of crying, I found my mama who is not just family but now a friend.—**Margot Tan, 20**

37. Seeing my best friend fight and beat cancer and go back to being the strong and beautiful person she was.—**Lee**

38. I became more independent. I learned that I'm capable of enjoying myself alone. It's empowering and liberating to be able to do things by myself.—**Felice T., 19**

39. Having a well-received exhibit in Hong Kong.—**Agang, 29, artist**

40. Being part of "Dekada '70" and "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan."—**Carlos Agassi**

41. I lost 20 pounds in spite of beer overdose.—**Drue, Dahong Palay**

42. Madonna doing the "James Bond" theme. It's about time.—**Jet, "I'd die another day before I disclose my true age"**

43. Being able to save a lot of money, hearing my son say he has the best mom in the world, being pregnant and preparing for my wedding.—**Jules**

44. Rekindled old friendships!—**Tessa Santos**

45. Getting a new job as CEO of INQ7.—**Paolo Prieto**

46. Getting into the school of my dreams, taking up the course I've always wanted and being an active correspondent for 2bU!.—**Saleema, 18**

47. Learning how to cook.—**Margo Flores**

48. I went steady with my princess and we've been together for almost five months now.—**JM, 19**

49. "Getting the ball rolling for the Artery and the Art Conservatory, getting involved in the arts and culture scene and seeing my long-lost daughter again.—**Delan Robillos, director of Artery, art organizing and artist management group**

50. Without a doubt, going on an "eyeball" arranged by an old high school acquaintance where I inadvertently met my boyfriend Nelz. It has been six months and things have only gotten better.—**Ian C.**

51. My grandma fully recovered from a stroke.—**Ditrie Y. Villacorta III, 25**

52. *Nakakaraos pa rin sa kahirapan ng buhay.*—**Elios Santos, 24, artist**

53. Meeting the greatest man in my life and spending my finest times with him.—**Leiden26**

54. "Duet in Dreams" exhibit and being a semifinalist for Metrobank's competition.—**Anton Balao, 25, artist**

55. The family flew in so we could be together for the holidays... that's always a treat. Missed my mom, sister and stepdad. Love that they came back.—**Leica**

56. I let go of a man—a mama's boy—who is not worth fighting for.—**Marian**

57. Successfully bridged the academe and the real world.—**Les, 22**

58. I fell in love with Samantha Echavez.—**JR Ignacio, 21**

59. I passed my thesis defense, graduated from college and got my first real job this year.—**Chezka, 18**

60. I found the one. The love of my life. My perfect match. Oh, and I also learned how to drive!—**Jugs, 23**

61. I got engaged for three weeks.—**Ed Castillo, 22**

62. After years of just thinking about it, I finally went ahead and wrote my very first short story—and ended up writing seven!—**Dimpy, age withheld**

63. I found myself again. I realized who I am and what I'm worth, thanks to the good and bad experiences that 2002 gave me.—**Acid Queen, 19**

64. I got laid!—**Jake, 23**

65. I saw my thesis suddenly come to life.—**JP, 20**

66. I met my "hunny!"—**Gayle, 22**

67. Finally being able to shift into my present course.—**Cathy, 19**

68. Getting pregnant and discovering the miracle of conceiving a baby.—**Adelle Idjao-Geraldo**

69. I got to know my officemates a lot better during our summer outing. I learned to appreciate our differences. They made my office life fun.—**Jen Plaza, 23**

70. I got a job right after graduating. I didn't have to experience the hassles of job-hunting. The years I spent in school paid of right away. I'm glad I made it!—**Elaine Arce Ignacio, 22**

71. I finally realized my strength. And that I don't have to put up with the crap others dump at me all the time.—**Gabby, 20**

72. Having a bouncing baby girl!—**Janalin Juco-Lua, 24**

73. Taking my first trip out of the country—and I did it on my own, without any parent.—**Celine Flores, 22**

74. We had a great *barkada* reunion that was two years in the making. It felt good to see my old pals in college become important people in society.—**Deo**

75. My first niece was born Feb. 9.—**Bryan**

76. When I saw my name on the graduating list.—**BJ Collado, 20**

77. Having my year-old son recover completely from a very rare and serious disease.—**Vince**

78. I finally came out to my parents.— **Twinkle, 24**

79. First girlfriend, first kiss.—**Big Dan the Man, 18**

80. Surviving the year unscathed, for the most part.—**Cheche, twentysomething**

81. I got this cool black PC which got me really surprised.—**Josef, 16**

82. My second anniversary with my girlfriend.—**Bi, 18**

83. "Because I'm really thin, no one took me seriously when I signed up for the football team. But criticisms made me even more determined to make it. After months of training, I did make it.—**Che, 18**

84. Getting drunk for the first time!—**Wency Tayag, 18**

85. After three failed relationships, I finally found the person who would stay with me constantly.—**Bunny, 20**

86. I realized what my real passion is. I've decided not to pursue medicine but to go into fashion design instead. It's a big, somewhat insane choice, but it feels so right.—**Li, 20**

87. When we had our plant tour and we went to as far as Manila, Baguio, Laguna, Subic, Tagaytay and Antipolo to visit the different electronics and electrical companies.—**Grace, 21, Davao City**

88. *Pinatawad din ako ng* mom *ko* after *mawala ko ang* phone *ko*!—**Ton, 18**

89. I had the chance to participate in UST's AB debate series and my partner and I reached the semis. Also, my boyfriend and I celebrated our first year together.—**Isa, 19**

90. Becoming the sports editor of the UST Varsitarian.—**Dexter Matilla, 20**

91. Being alive. Having been able to face and overcome stuggles, having been able to make it to 2003.—**Robi, 20**

92. I thought I had everything that I needed—a good job and loyal friends—until I found the right companion. This was the best turning point in my life, something that changed my life forever.—**Johnwil, 21**

93. Getting a 1.25 in a subject last semester.—**5hIn3, 20**

94. I lost more than 10 pounds.— **Xtian, 23**

95. I graduated from college and spent my summer in the Philippines' two hottest spots—Boracay and Palawan.—**Giles, 22**

96. My girlfriend and I celebrated our first anniversary and we were able to withstand the storms of 2002 together.—**Paul Isla, 22**

97. Becoming the director of ABC 5's "Single!"—**B Canapi**

98. Osiris, my firstborn, and my husband John, who loves me and cares for me.—**Amber, 19**

99. Getting over my ex, finally!—**Jie, 27**

100. The worst thing that happened to me this year was the fire that broke out in the place I was renting in Malate. Everything inside was burned, but it paved the way for the best thing that happened to me this year—I learned how strong I am as a person. It made me realize that I am not that much attached to my material possessions no matter how I love them all.—**Chino Pacia, 25, Caloocan City**

This New Year, I promise to
exercise everyday, wear less make-up,
grow my hair longer, don a halter top,
buy red lipstick, eat a hearty breakfast,
get another little black dress,
take the stairs going up,
crave for sweets less, meet more people,
ask a guy for a date, wear high heels,
reward myself more, stress myself less,
have my nails done once a week,
show more skin, try on shorter skirts,
hike up a mountain, take up a new sport,
get a different hairstyle, wear super low jeans,
enroll in pilates, live life fully.

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THE YEAR IN TECHNOLOGY

The matrix reloaded

By Edwin P. Sallan
2bU! Correspondent

Mobiles, Palms and film-less cameras were hot gizmos in 2002

EASY as ABC. The three most important letters in our alphabet this year were D-V-D.

Okay, that's two Ds, and DVDs have been around for a while now, but so what? 2002 was the year when both DVD players and discs (hey, we're talking about the originals) became so affordable that it was really back to the future for an increasing number of households this year.

Perhaps it was the superior resolution, the excellent sound or the loads of extras that often included deleted scenes and alternate endings. Whatever it was, DVD did change the face of watching movies in the comfort of one's home.

Message sent. Pagers showed no sign of coming back in vogue in 2002, and for very good reason. Cellular phones became even better and a lot more colorful. More fun and creative ways of sending text messages were introduced last year, the most exciting of which was the Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) supported by handsets like the increasingly popular Nokia 7650, a smart phone that has a built-in digital camera in addition to organizer functions.

DVD changes the face of watching movies at home.

Take a photo of yourself and attach it to every message you send, then ask the party at the other line to do the same and it suddenly feels like he or she is just right in front of you.

And even with its occasional "clunkiness," short battery life and supposedly superior competition (i.e. Sony Ericsson P800), the 7650 was still the most coveted Christmas gift of 2002 simply because it was text-friendly like other Nokias before it.

In a text-crazy nation like ours, texting is the only feature that matters in any mobile phone.

The PDA wars. The competition between Palm-based personal digital assistants and pocket PCs became even fiercer in 2002.

High-resolution color screens are now the norm for just about all PDA's, save for one remaining holdout, the Palm Zire. The new Sony Clies and the Palm Tungsten are now the must-have Palms.

New players such as Asus, Toshiba, Fujitsu-Siemens and NEC have suddenly made the pocket PC a formidable platform to reckon with.

And the PDA-cell phone combo of the Handspring Treo has finally met its match with the new 02 xda, the Treo's PocketPC counterpart.

PDAs are still hot.

GPRS and Bluetooth. Two of the year's most exciting technologies were GPRS (general packet radio service), which allowed for faster Internet access on your mobile phone or PDA, and Bluetooth, a faster and wider-ranging alternative to infrared.

But GPRS is still not compelling enough for most people to ditch their plain and simple talk-and-text handsets.

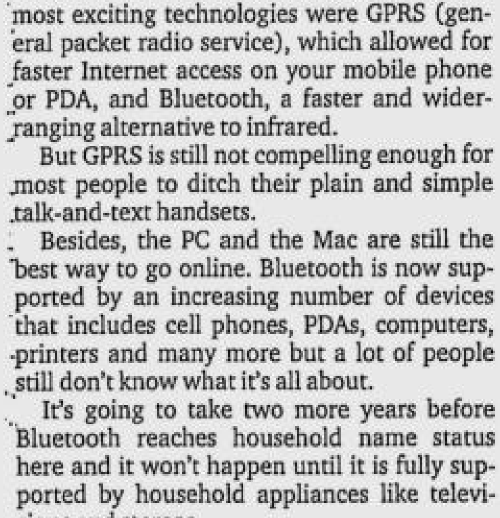
Besides, the PC and the Mac are still the best way to go online. Bluetooth is now supported by an increasing number of devices that includes cell phones, PDAs, computers, printers and many more but a lot of people still don't know what it's all about.

It's going to take two more years before Bluetooth reaches household name status here and it won't happen until it is fully supported by household appliances like televisions and stereos.

Look ma, no film. Taking pictures has never been this fun. There was simply no stopping the attack of the digital cameras in 2002.

The major camera manufacturers from Nikon to Canon to Pentax to Kodak released their own line of increasingly versatile cameras, requiring no film. The number of pics you can shoot is only limited by your camera's internal memory and removable storage capacity (i.e. Compact Flash and Smart Multimedia cards). You can delete the pictures you don't like and you can enhance the ones you like in your computer before printing them.

Some of the more popular models of the year include Sony Cybershot, the Nikon Coolpix and the Kodak Easyshare series.



THE DROOL-WORTHY iBook is one of the lightest and sturdiest laptops you can get your hands on.

Apple of the eyes. Although the new iMac, the new iBook and the iPod were released in late 2001, it was in 2002 and in more powerful configurations when these cool-looking toys landed in more households in the country.

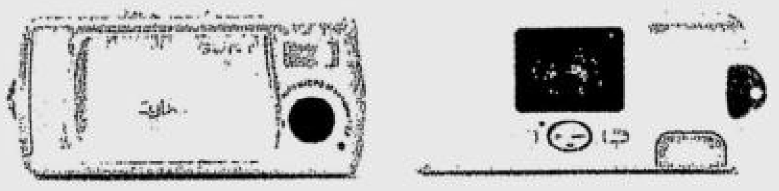
Despite its limited expansion options, the lamp-looking iMac with its swiveling LCD screen is likely to remain a conversation piece long after its specs are considered as obsolete.

The new iBook is just as irreverent and is the coolest-looking laptop around. It's one of the lightest and sturdiest, too.

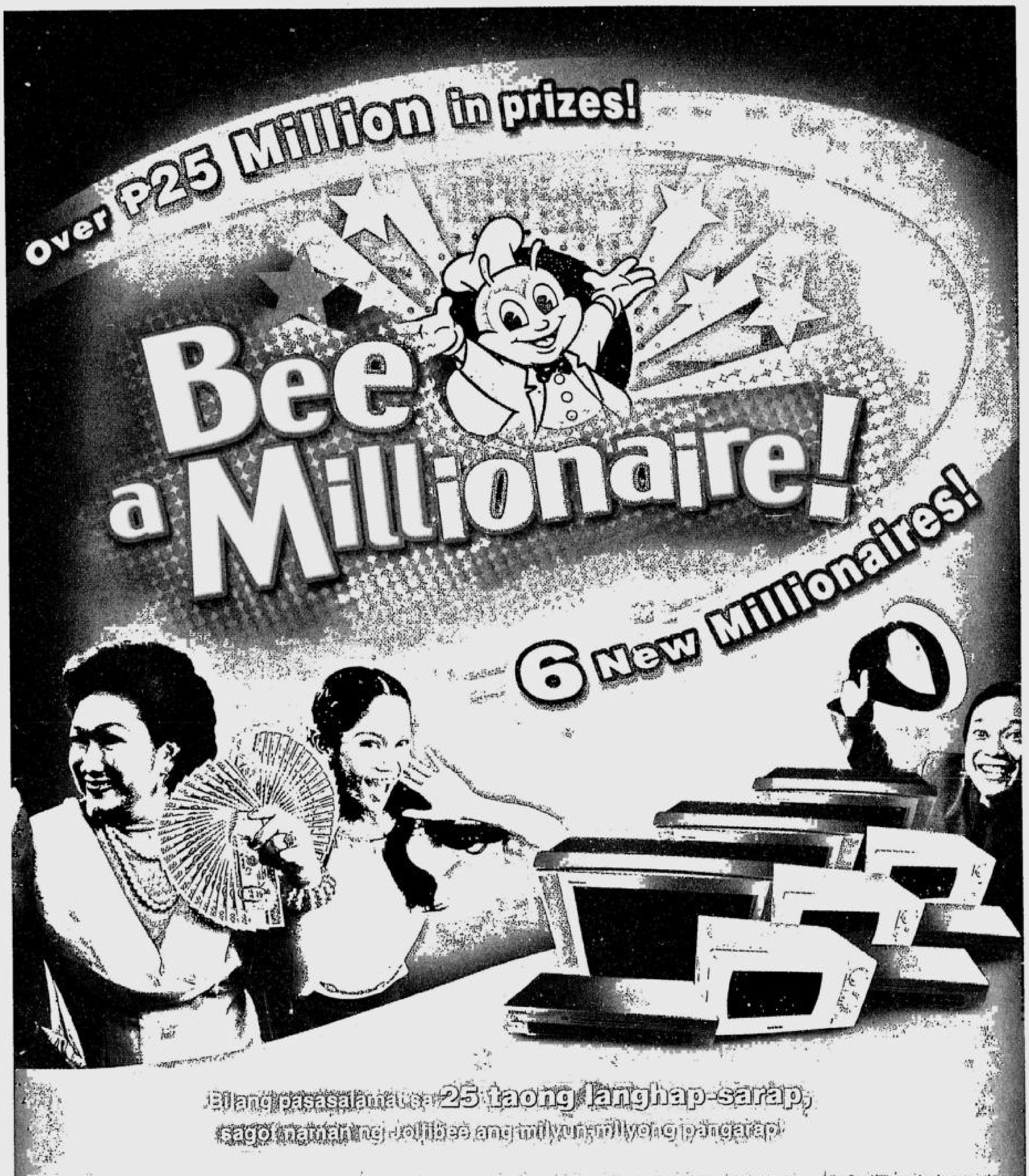
Don't even get us started on the new iPod, the benchmark by which all other MP3 players are now measured. Your entire CD collection converted to MP3 or other digital music format in its 20GB capacity? In a word, wow!

NOKIA 7650—the most coveted Christmas gift for 2002

THE NEW iPod is the benchmark by which all other MP3 players are now measured.



DIGICAMS like this Sony Cybershot U make taking pictures even more fun.


Over P25 Million in prizes!
Bee a Millionaire!
6 New Millionaires!

Bilang pasasalamat sa 25 taong langhap-sarap, sagot naman ng Jollibee ang milyun-milyong pangarap

HOW TO JOIN

1. For every P125.00 food purchase (single receipt), the customer is entitled to one scratch card.
2. Valid for all store transactions: dine-in, take-out, drive-thru, delivery, kiddie parties, and bulk orders. Not included is the purchase of Gift Certificates. However, redemption of Gift Certificates at the store following the minimum food purchase entitles a customer to a scratch card.
3. To participate, the customer must present his/her receipt to the person manning the promo booth located inside the store. The receipt will then be stamped with "CLAIMED" to mark that the cards have already been claimed.

The customer gets the number of scratch cards that he/she is entitled to.

Example: Food purchase requirement - P125.00
Customer purchase - P460.00
Equivalent scratch cards - 3 pieces

4. Employees of Jollibee Foods Corporation, franchise-operated stores, advertising and PR agencies and their relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity are disqualified from joining the redemption and raffle promotion.

There are two ways to win:

INSTANT PRIZE

1. The customer can win an instant prize by scratching the four round slots on the scratch card. If the scratch card reveals three out of four slots with the same prize, he/she wins that prize.
2. The bigger portion of the perforated scratch card should then be surrendered at the counter to claim the instant prize. The smaller portion of the scratch card serves as the raffle entry and may be used to join the raffle.
3. Only winning scratch cards with authenticated security codes will be honored.
4. All instant prizes that are Jollibee food products (Regular Yum, Spaghetti Special, Regular Coca-Cola, Regular Iced Tea, Regular Juice, Regular French Fries, Pocket Pie, and 1 pc. Chickenjoy with Rice) may be claimed at any Jollibee store.
5. Redemption of products will be until 60 days from the end of promo.

MONTHLY RAFFLE

1. The customer must fill up the raffle coupon with his name, address, telephone number, and affix signature on the space provided and must drop this in the designated drop box inside the store. Deadline for dropping of entries is on the 20th of every month and raffle draw is on the 25th of each month.

INCLUSIVE DATES	DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES	RAFFLE DRAW	VENUE
January 1 - 20	January 20, 2003	January 25, 2003	TV Program TBA
Jan. 21 - Feb. 20	February 20, 2003	February 25, 2003	TV Program TBA
Feb. 21 - March 20	March 20, 2003	March 25, 2003	TV Program TBA

2. The non-winning entries of the previous months' draws will no longer be included in the succeeding monthly draws.
3. Raffle draws shall only be held with the supervision of a DTI representative in a nationwide TV program.
4. A participant can only win once in a draw. Should a person's name be drawn more than once during a monthly draw, he may only claim the bigger prize. However, he may again join the raffle for the succeeding months.
5. There will be 2 grand prize winners of P1,000,000.00, tax paid, per month: 1 winner from Metro Manila and another from outside Metro Manila. There will also be monthly consolation prizes allocated as follows:

25 units of Samsung 53.34cms (21") Color TV (13 for Metro Manila, 12 for provincial winners)
25 units of Samsung Microwave Oven (13 for Metro Manila, 12 for provincial winners)
25 units of Samsung DVD Player (13 for Metro Manila, 12 for provincial winners)

6. All monthly raffle winners of the One Million cash prize may only claim the prize at:

The Marketing Division
Jollibee Foods Corporation
10/F, Jollibee Plaza
#10 Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center
Pasig City, Metro Manila

Provincial winners of Samsung appliances may claim their prize at the Jollibee store nearest to their address specified in the registered notice. Metro Manila winners of Samsung appliances can claim their prize at Jollibee Plaza.

7. Winners have to present at least two (2) valid identification cards such as driver's license, SSS, TIN, school or company ID, and birth certificate.
8. Winners will be notified through registered mail and their names posted on the stores' announcement posters. They will also be informed through telephone whenever possible. Travel expenses that may be incurred by winners in claiming their prize shall be to their account.
9. Prizes not claimed within sixty (60) days from notification date shall be forfeited with prior clearance from DTI.
10. Winners authorize Jollibee to disclose and publicize their names and other particulars in any mode or manner as Jollibee deems appropriate, whether they win an instant prize or win in the monthly draws.

Feeling Jollibee at 25 walang kasing sarap

DELBROS
SAMSUNG DIGITall
Coca-Cola
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. [illegible] Series of 2002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DUTY FREE PHILIPPINES
Fiestamall

A special treat from Duty Free Philippines for the
12 Days of Christmas

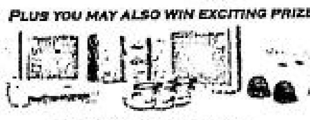
₱49=$1

EXTENDED UP TO JAN. 15, 2003!

Handog ng duty free ng bayan sa mga OFW at mga balikbayan.

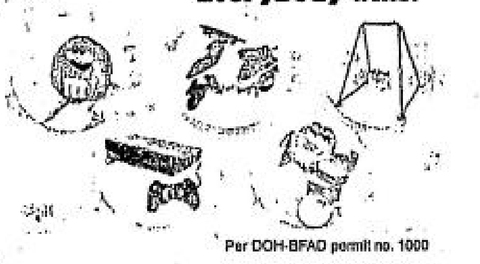
Get a chance to
WIN a brand new Ford Explorer or ₱1 million cash

PLUS YOU MAY ALSO WIN EXCITING PRIZES INSTANTLY!



Per DOH-BFAD permit no. 0999
Promo period: Nov.1, 2002 to Jan. 31, 2003

Pick-a-Prize from M&M's CHOCOLATE CANDIES
Thousands of Prizes!
Everybody wins!



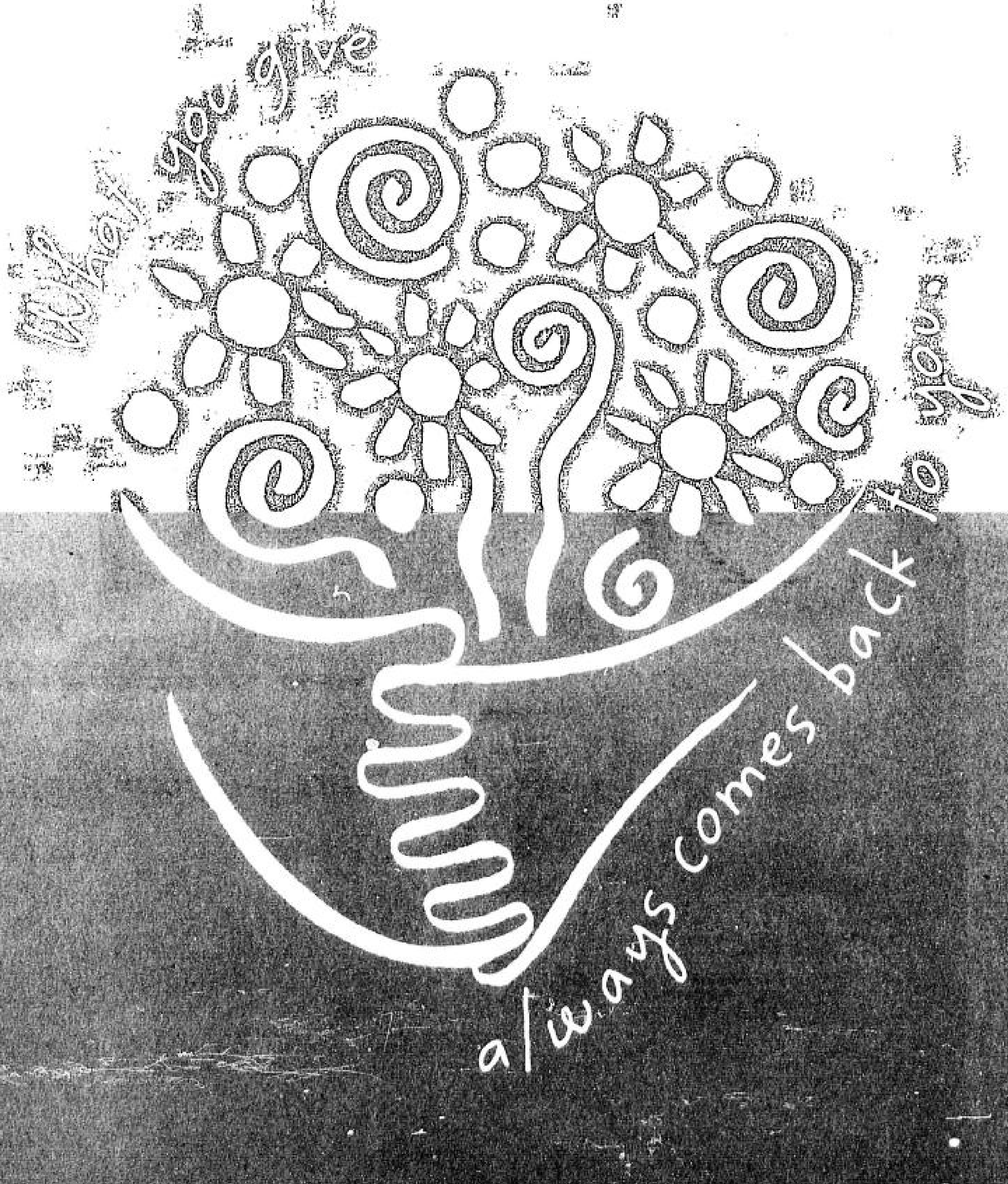
Per DOH-BFAD permit no. 1000
Promo period: Nov.1, 2002 to Jan. 31, 2003

Plus many exciting instant give-aways from participating brands!

AMERICAN HOME CARLOS 1 FRIGIDAIRE HERSHEY'S Home Office JVC M&M NESTLE PHILIPS TIME TOBLERONE club

The discount on dollar purchases will be based on the percentage difference between the official Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas rate of the day and ₱49.

Per DTI-NCR permit no. A2-0462 series of 2002


What you give
always comes back to you.

This Christmas, let us be part of your saying 'thank you' to those who brighten your life. Show how much they mean to you with special gifts that will surely make them smile. Make this holiday a season of gratitude and let them experience the brilliance of Christmas at Rustan's.

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2bU! to be young • to be you • to be young • to be you • To be you!

For feedback, text us at (0919)880-33-54 or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

LIFESTYLE

SARAH Meier

THE 2BU! YEAR-ENDER READER SURVEY

The best and worst of 2002

Mandy Moore is actress of the year. Las Ketchup gets ketchupped

RUPERT Grint and Daniel Radcliffe from "Harry Potter"

MAUI Taylor

JOHN Hall

JOLINA Magdangal

WE had asked you to vote for what you think are the best and worst in the categories of music, film, fashion, health and beauty, food, literature, television, sports and technology. We were swamped with votes sent via e-mail and snail mail. And now, after long hours of tallying and counting, the results are in!

DONITA Rose

As much as we hate to admit it, this year's big winner is Mandy Moore. Not only is she movie actress of the year for "A Walk to Remember," she also gets a lot of votes for best singer and best fashion icon.

"A Walk to Remember" also receives a lot of votes for best movie and best book, but "Harry Potter" topples it. J.K. Rowling waves her magic wand and still gets the prize for best author, leaving Nicholas Sparks in the dust.

Here are the rest of the results:

Music

While 2bU! readers proclaim Incubus as foreign band of the year and Chicosci as local band of the year, they pull the plug on A1 and Las Ketchup, the year's worst musical act.

Singer of the year Norah Jones' soulful voice gets the thumbs-up while Mariah Carey's wails and screams get two thumbs down.

John Mayer gets double victory as his song "Your Body is a Wonderland" is voted song of the year, and his album "Room for Squares" is named album of the year.

YOGA

At the other end of the spectrum, it is a double defeat for Las Ketchup whose album and song (you know which song we are talking about, don't you?) have driven the readers on the verge of insanity (as a voter pleads, "*Tama na po!*").

2bU! readers can watch Madonna's "Die Another Day" video over and over again but they switch channels when Christina Aguilera's "Dirrty" comes on.

2bU! readers are still tuned in to last year's best radio station, Magic 89.9 dwTM. They keep their dials away from WRR 101.9.

Film

"Harry Potter" fans trample all over Mandy Moore's fans and successfully push the "Chamber of Secrets" to the top, so that "Chamber" is best movie for 2002.

Daniel Radcliffe is still actor of the year while Mandy Moore is actress of the year.

"Eight-Legged Freaks" joins David Arquette and Maui Taylor in the losers' corner.

Greenbelt 3 is the most ideal place to watch a movie while the readers believe that the SM Cinemas need major improvement.

Fashion

According to the 2bU! readers, John Hall and Sarah Meier are the hottest models for 2002.

Wendell Ramos, the results say, should disappear from the modeling scene and just try harder in his acting career.

Rajo Laurel is still the favorite designer.

The readers rave over Guess?, this year's favorite brand, and rant about Giordano.

We are happy to report that local chains have gotten tremendous praise from the readers.

Shopaholics hit (in alphabetical order) Anonymous, Bench, Penshoppe and Sari-Sari

THE BEST/ E2

CATCH MASTERCARD HOLIDAY TREATS IN AYALA MALLS
AYALA CENTER
AYALA CENTER CEBU
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TIMEZONE
WEGA
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Surprise your friends this season!

Spread the joy of Funtxt everyday 'til New Year. Send the cutest, wackiest picture greetings to friends with your holiday message.

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Characters to choose from and their corresponding codes:
Garfield (GF), South Park (SP), Jungle Jimmy (JJ),
MC Snow (MC), Sugar Puff (SU)

Download rate: P10.00

2002 fashion's *a case of something borrowed, something new*

By Jason Doplito
2bU! correspondent

FASHION trends had a more interesting twist this year compared to last year's somber and laid-back looks. Although many of last year's styles actually spilled over to this year, they were made more frivolous and playful, as in the case of the bohemian look.

The '80s look was finally put back on the shelf, as potential classics took the limelight. But it would be hard to identify collectively the trends that clicked this year as belonging to one period since most of them were borrowed from previous decades. More are expected to follow in the coming year.

Here are the 10 top trends of 2002:

VERSACE ruffles the men.

Sandblasted jeans. A mainstay in most wardrobes, the jeans underwent several bleachings, distressing and sand-papering to look as good as 2002's trailblazer. With many unique ways of doing this now, the effect on denims varies. Some even have creases that are supposed to fold. Jeans also appear to be more rugged with the edges trimmed for a worn-out look. So even if everyone seems to be wearing them, chances are, one person's jeans look will be different from others'.

Sportswear. Having become too cool to be worn just to the gym, sports-themed attire is now worn by teenagers to clubs or parties. The garments include football jerseys, most of them imitations of classics and now known as retro shirts. The recent World Cup created a rage for this look, even if the country didn't participate in the event. Shirts and jackets had different-colored strips in their sleeves, and jogging or yoga pants were preferred for a matched look.

Homemade accessories. Local teen magazines have them all over their pages. Expensive jewelry were left to the older folks, and even silver practically disappeared from the scene. This year, accessories were bolder and chunkier, coming in every imaginable shape and color. They also often didn't cost much. Girls knew someone who made them for extra income. Like last year, drop earrings were still the rage, while necklaces were multi-stranded. Beads were the material of choice.

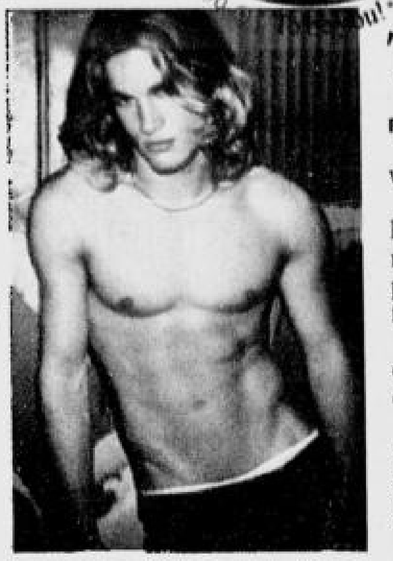
Berets. Perhaps the only military-looking trend left this year was the beret. No other hat/cap made that much of a splash. Camouflage was totally out.

The '80s look was finally put back on the shelf, as potential classics took the limelight

Belts. In no other year were belts given as much attention as in 2002. They were wider and bigger—kids had more reason not to be naughty, with the kind of belts worn this year. Although some were too wide that they probably would have looked better on horses, no one really cared. Belts were worn low-slung and usually paired with a minimalist top or bottom to put the emphasis on the accessory. Another hit were cords used as belts that were tied instead of buckled. Both gals and guys' belts were embellished with metals, chains and, occasionally, even bullets.

Rebonding. Obviously, hair became straighter this year. No one really knew how the rebonding mania started. After all, as long as you look and feel beautiful, who cares how it all happened?

Toned bodies vs. bulging biceps. The male anorexic look never really reached our shores, still international ads and ramp models veered away from the Arnold Schwarzenneger look. Male models appeared to be more natural-looking, particularly Calvin Klein model Travis Fimmel, although you'd have to see him in pants so you won't feel inadequate. Achieving this look simply means doing regular sports activities instead of pumping iron in the gym 24 hours. Guys like Fimmel don't have veins "popping out" of their biceps, which really looks better. Just ask the girls.


TRAVIS Fimmel embodies male virility.

Necktie. Two words: Avril Lavigne. Not that much of a hit, but it created enough buzz, especially when John Mayer didn't find the necktie look particularly appealing. Neckties were paired with anything, just as long as people had the chutzpah to carry it off. However, expect this trend to pass, together with 2002. Avril herself chucked it off in her latest music video.

The hippie look. Peasant, bohemian, gypsy—whatever you call it, every woman has the stuff for it in her closet. However, off-shoulder peasant tops were out by the time 2002 came, and the emphasis was more on embroidery and ruffles, which dominated the look of the summer season. When the rainy season arrived, people were already tired of them. The men weren't left out in the hippie retrospective. Clothing stores came out with shirt versions for men. People R People, for example, had lots of them. The shirts had low-cut necklines and minimal embroidery or trimmings (even lace, for example). Some had crisscrossed strings for a sexier effect. They were light and comfortable to wear, thus, an instant hit.

Denims. The well-loved material staged a comeback and was used in almost everything. From bags to notebooks, the denim was everywhere. It may not be long before we see denim socks!

The best and worst of 2002

From page E1

when they're in the malls.

The results show that the readers love the bohemian look and low-rise jeans equally. The elephant pants are still considered a major fashion mistake.

Dangling and antique-looking earrings are the ultimate accessory of 2002.

But 2bU! readers have gotten tired of belts with fringes and they apparently do not share Avril Lavigne's penchant for neckties.

The votes for fashion icons still mirror last year's. Tessa Prieto-Valdes is still the queen.

Readers still refuse to dress like Jolina Magdangal.

Health and beauty

The ads must be working. Bench Fix Salons are highly popular.

Long hair—whether natural or rebonded—is back, along with the Brandon Boyd look for guys.

Bleaching one's locks is still a no-no, according to the votes.

Readers like keeping their tootsies pretty. Foot spa and foot scrub essentials have been voted as beauty products of the year.

Some local brands have to work harder as readers refuse to let RDL and Maxi-peel touch their skin.

Taebo and yoga still rule as the best fitness regimen.

Starvation, as common sense would tell you, is a big no.

Literature

J.K. Rowling's magic is still strong. She wins the honors for best book and best author for her "Harry Potter" series.

The "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series gets the thumbs down again, just like last year.

Cosmopolitan is best magazine of the year. Star Studio is frowned upon.

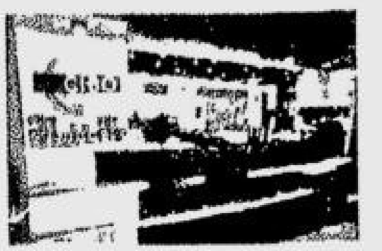
Food

Cibo is still the readers' favorite restaurant while Racks, they believe, needs a menu makeover.

McDonald's rules the fast-food arena, with Jollibee following closely behind.

Chowking and A&W get the thumbs down.

KFC's Hotshots is this year's best dish while Pepsi Blue is voted best drink.


CIBO

Sports

The Green Archers' BJ Manalo is voted athlete of the year while the Ateneo Blue Eagles kick in as the best UAAP team.

The readers agree that the NU Bulldogs need more practice and that they can do without seeing Shaq play ball.

Television

No other commercial comes close to Coke's brilliant "*Para sa lahat... mismo*" ad.

Readers cringe when the government-sponsored "*Labing-labing, galing-galing, hangin-hangin*" series of ads and the Rexona confessionals are aired.

"Amazing Race" and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" are tied for best show.

Readers say they hate noontime shows and local sitcoms.

"Smallville" stars Kristin Kreuk and Tom Welling get the thumbs up as actress and actor while Mahal's Jimboy and Johnny Knoxville of Jackass get the thumbs down. Donita is still unbeatable as VJ. Her home, music giant MTV, is best music channel, too.

Heart Evangelista and MYX, readers say, still need major improvement.

Technology

The best website is www.fractalcow.com because of "Maritess vs. the Superfriends." The worst site is the sickening www.maganda.com.

While 2bU! readers have gotten sick of playing Counterstrike, they still enjoy Warcraft.

No gadget comes close to Nokia's 7650. It wins by a landslide over other gizmos. Pagers, the readers believe, should be left to doctors or used as paperweights.

2002 in music

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

CHRISTINA Aguilera's "Dirrty" video

EMINEM

SO we're happy that pop has finally given way to some pretty good rock bands, hip-hop has rushed in fresh meat to feast on, and jazz has finally made a cool entrance to Top 40 radio. Amid the new inductees to radio airplay (not counting college radio, that is), music has had its usual hits and misses, success stories and scandals, the never-ending catfights among young divas, and the answer to the question as to who's really punk.

While 'N Sync's Lance Bass failed to launch into space and Justin Timberlake tried to launch a solo career, oh-so-cool anti-commercial pop bands such as Phantom Planet and The Strokes infected rock stations with their tunes. Award shows sucked, local music productions rocked, and Boldstar proved that guys wearing eyeliner are not gay.

Girl rookies kept their bellies to themselves and opted to don instruments, the past is brought back to the present with releases from Nirvana, Elvis and the Rolling Stones, and musicians stepped out of MTV and into the big screen.

January

Marilyn Manson is charged with sexual assault after rubbing his, um, genitals on a guard's head. George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord," a reissue of the 1970 hit from his debut solo album, "All Things Must Pass," is given to the Material World Charitable Foundation, which helps poor children worldwide. Weezer releases its follow-up to the "Green Album," through its website.

February

The Grammys proves to be boring, but Alicia Keys takes home five awards. "Queen of the Damned" is released in the US, and everyone ignores how bad the movie is and praises the late Aaliyah's acting skills. "Crossroads" is released in the US and everyone ignores how bad it is but picks on Britney Spears' acting skills.

March

It's official: The Prince of Darkness doesn't know how to operate the VCR. "The Osbournes" airs on MTV. Prepubescent teenyboppers rejoice when Justin Timberlake breaks up with Britney Spears. Alanis Morissette keeps her clothes on with the release of "Under Rug Swept" and Kylie Minogue strips down for "Fever." The Ramones get inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame. Ely Buendia "graduates" from the Eraserheads and pursues a solo career.

Christina shows she's dirtier than Britney, Eminem generates Oscar buzz, and Santana repeats the success of 'Supernatural'

April

The Fatal Posporos' Kris Gorra-Dancel is asked to head the new Eraserheads. Lisa "Left Eye" Lopes dies in an automobile accident in Honduras. R&B makes way for Ashanti's debut album, after singing hooks and hanging around hip-hop studios hoping to make it big.

May

Twenty years and 13 albums later, Megadeth disbands, after Dave Mustaine sustains an injury on his left arm. After auditioning hopeful guitarists around the US (and stealing their compositions in the process), Fred Durst begs Wes Borland to rejoin Limp Bizkit. What will become the best-selling album of 2002, Eminem's "The Eminem Show," is released (with no songs inspired by marriage and divorce). Slapshock and Rivermaya rock the Music Museum with an acoustic production.

NORAH Jones

June

The 2002 Fete dela Musique takes place at El Pueblo in Ortigas and brings together 22 bands for an all-night music fest for peace. The Pin-Up Girls gets signed to the US indie label Know-it All Records, after A&R Michael Sutton hears the band through NU 107 broadcasts. R. Kelly is arrested for 21 counts of child pornography. Nelly's "Hot in Here" is released, spawning a bagillion parties playing that song over and over again. Ramones' bassist Dee Dee Ramones dies of a drug overdose at age 49. "A Walk to Remember" is released, and we all cry.

MICHELLE Branch

JACKO goes wacko.

July

More tapes of R. Kelly doing the nasty are found in his rented RV a week after his arrest. Justin Timberlake admits to seeing Janet Jackson (if you can't imitate Michael Jackson, date his sister). Sharon Osbourne is diagnosed with colon cancer.

August

Boldstar debuts with "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Something... What Are You Really?", Chicosci launches its "Method of Breathing," and the new Eraserheads shell out its "Please Transpose" EP among lucky friends and fans during a soft launch. The MTV Video Music Awards bores, with Guns 'n' Roses' Axl Rose materializing from nowhere and giving a surprise performance with ex-Replacements bassist Tommy Stinson, ex-Nine Inch Nails Robin Finck and guitarist Buckethead, leaving everyone praying a new album is not in the works.

September

Napster is finally put to rest when a judge refutes BMG's attempt to buy the file-sharing network. Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale tie the knot, and the Rolling Stones release their "Forty Licks" greatest hits album.

October

Christina Aguilera makes Britney look like a saint in her "Dirrty" video. The Thailand government thinks the video dirty as well since it shows Thai posters promoting the country's sex industry ("Thailand's Sex Tourism," "Young Underage Girls") posted everywhere in the video's boxing scene. Carlos Santana's "Shaman" is released, with Wyclef Jean, P.O.D. and Dido among the stellar list of collaborators, Nirvana's "You Know You're Right" gets airplay. Run DMC's Jam Master Jay is murdered in the recording studio at the age of 37. Squidd 9, a.k.a. Raimund Marasigan, gives us the sweetest deal: give him a blank CD, and you walk away with a copy of his "Squidd 9: The Deleted Scenes," an album composed of remixes of music by Rivermaya, Ciudad and The Eraserheads, among others.

November/December

The Katha Awards are held at the Ultra. Michael Jackson dangles his son from a hotel balcony. Talks of Eminem getting an Oscar nod become rife after the release of the movie "8 Mile." The 2002 NU Rock Awards get mixed reviews. Joe Strummer of The Clash dies of a cardiac arrest at the age of 50.

2002 2bU! Music Awards

MISS Congeniality Award: Michelle Branch. She has collaborated with Carlos Santana and her sophomore album will credit Jewel, Dave Navarro, Chris Chaney, David Campbell and Scott Weiland as songwriters, producers and session musicians.

I Don't Need My Friends (But After Trying Solo I Will) Award: Justin Timberlake and Nick Carter. This is the reason they're in boy bands.

The World is My Gynecologist Award: Christina Aguilera. With all those hit records, you'd think she'd have enough money to afford better clothes.

Tiangge Theme Song: "Asereje" by Las Ketchup. Any minute now someone's bound to either break out into the dance or burst into tears.

Who Needs Lyrics with Depth Award/Needs to Enroll in Grammar School Award: Avril Lavigne's "Ska8er Boi." "He turns on TV/ Guess who she sees/ Skater boy rockin' on MTV." Let me ponder that.

Biggest Ovaries Award: Dashboard Confessional. Chris Carraba, for what it's worth, this too, shall pass.

Best Newlywed Award: Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale. Can you imagine their children in kindergarten? "My parents are gods."

Worst Hook-Up Award: Pamela Anderson and Kid Rock. Can you imagine their children in kindergarten? "My parents are sick."

I Wasn't Making Record Sales so I Guess It's Time to Get Married Award: Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey. Finally.

Most Overrated Term to Generate Confusion Award: "Indie." Set it straight—is it a genre or is it short for "independent?"

In Need of Shampoo Award: The Strokes. Calling on shampoo companies looking for bands to sponsor…

Best Cover of The Dave Matthew's Band's "Crash" Award: John Mayer's "Your Body is a Wonderland." Pass the vanilla.

Best Stunt Award: Vanessa Carlton playing a piano behind a truck. Hey, she was this close to being road kill.

Best Water-bottle Aim Award: Some random mosher hitting Chicosci vocalist Miguel Chavez at the 2002 NU Rock Awards. That must have hurt.

Best Debut Album: Boldstar's "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Something… What Are You, Really?", and Norah Jones' "Come Away With Me." Please add these to your CD collection.

It's the End of 2002, Where's Their Album? Award: Sugarfree's debut. We're tired having to run to every gig just to hear them play. We'd want them in our stereos at home, please.

It's the End of 2002, We Hope You're Almost Done Recording Your LP Award: The Happy Meals and A Murder of Crows. *Ang tagaaaaaaaal…*

Best Swap Award: Raimund Marasigan's "Squidd 9: Deleted Scenes" CD with a blank CD-R. Beats swapping dogs for cell phones.

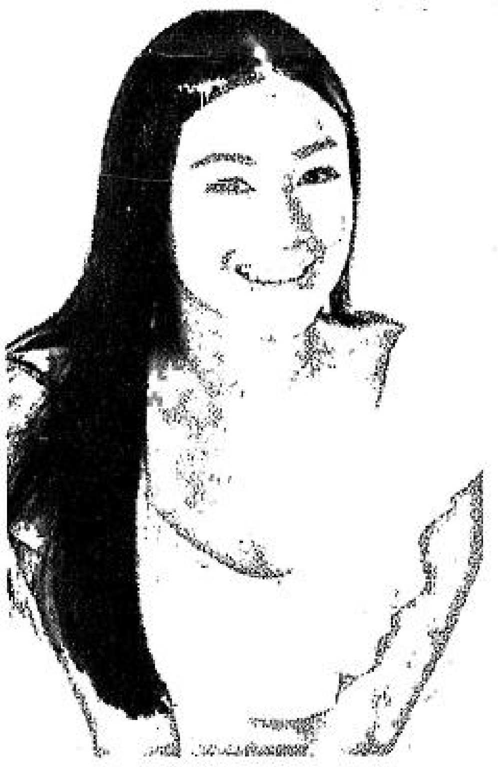
Most Overlooked Video: The itchyworms!'s "Antipara" video. Too bad feedback for the second one is, well, bad.

Most Likely to Take Home Grammys Next Year Award: Norah Jones. If she doesn't, then there is no hope for tomorrow's music.

2002's top personalities

The list will probably spark heated debates but these are people who made our heads turn or gave us a nasty headache

THE POWERBOYS


HEART Evangelista

MIKE Cortez

GEC Chia

AUBREY Miles

By Jules Alcantara
2bU! Correspondent

THE LIST of the 2002 personalities will probably spark heated debates, especially since these people were included for making our heads turn or giving us a nasty headache. But here goes:

Heart Evangelista

No doubt about it, Evangelista is this year's "It" girl. She charmed the *masa* as well as the most *sosyal* of *colegialas*.

She sang, danced, hosted, acted and was even one of this year's most in demand endorsers.

This year's "crush ng bayan" showed that a girl can have it all—looks, talent, breeding and charm—without turning us into green-eyed monsters.

Flighty, flirty and yet amazingly not annoying, this girl is so fresh she does not seem to be at risk of overexposure.

People want to have more of her. No need to consult a crystal ball to confirm the obvious—Evangelista will continue to reign supreme as the New Year unfolds.

The Powerboys

Women of all ages swooned as Jordan Herrera, Greg Martin, Geoff Rodriguez, Jay Salas and Frank Garcia flashed their washboard abs and asked, *"Meron ba kayong mga kamay?"*

Indeed there was a show of hands (and God only knows what else) as women and members of the third sex watched in awe the five young men lip synch and gyrate to the latest pop hits. Launched in a Rexona ad, they make up this year's favorite boy group even without singing skills (and talent, some quarters claim). Fans were more than willing to overlook that obvious lack. And to prove that these boys have arrived, some, if not all of them, have become fodder for the juiciest and nastiest gossip in town.

Only time will tell if they can convert their 15 minutes of fame into solid careers.

George "Gec" Chia (Ateneo Blue Eagles)

At the University of the East Red Warriors and Ateneo Blue Eagles game, it was a sight to behold Chia sink the shot that spelled glory for his team, bringing Ateneo to the finals.

It was commonly perceived that the Blue Eagles had everything going for them in the last two seasons of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP), except for one thing—they needed a hero, someone with the heart of a champion.

Chia was more than willing to fill the vacuum. Never mind that he only played one game in season 64 of the UAAP. Whatever he lacked in height or might or even playing time, he made up for it through sheer courage and determination. Any avid watcher of the UAAP knew that the twenty-something from Zamboanga was not the typical Blue Eagle player—he was in a class of his own. Without him, the Blue Eagles probably would not have made it even to the finals.

Definitely this 6"1' Blue Eagle guard stands above his peers.

Mike Cortez (DLSU Green Archers)

You either love or hate Mike Cortez, considered the best pointguard the country has at this time. There seems to be no middle ground for the Philippine Basketball Association hopeful.

After helping the Green Archers in that epic showdown with the Blue Eagles and performing a jaw-dropping, flawless dunk over the towers of Ateneo, Cortez became the unofficial heel following La Salle's loss.

Rumored to have dropped Game 3, he further confused fans and foes by initially declaring that he would stay on to play one more year for the Green Archers then failing to suit up for the La Salle-led Philippine Basketball League team, ICTSI. Hopes of seeing him vindicate his team in next year's UAAP were dashed when he announced on television he planned to join the professional ranks.

Up until the last minute, it was not definite if he were joining the PBA draft. He was the last player to submit his credentials to the PBA board. You can't expect less drama from the "Cool Cat."

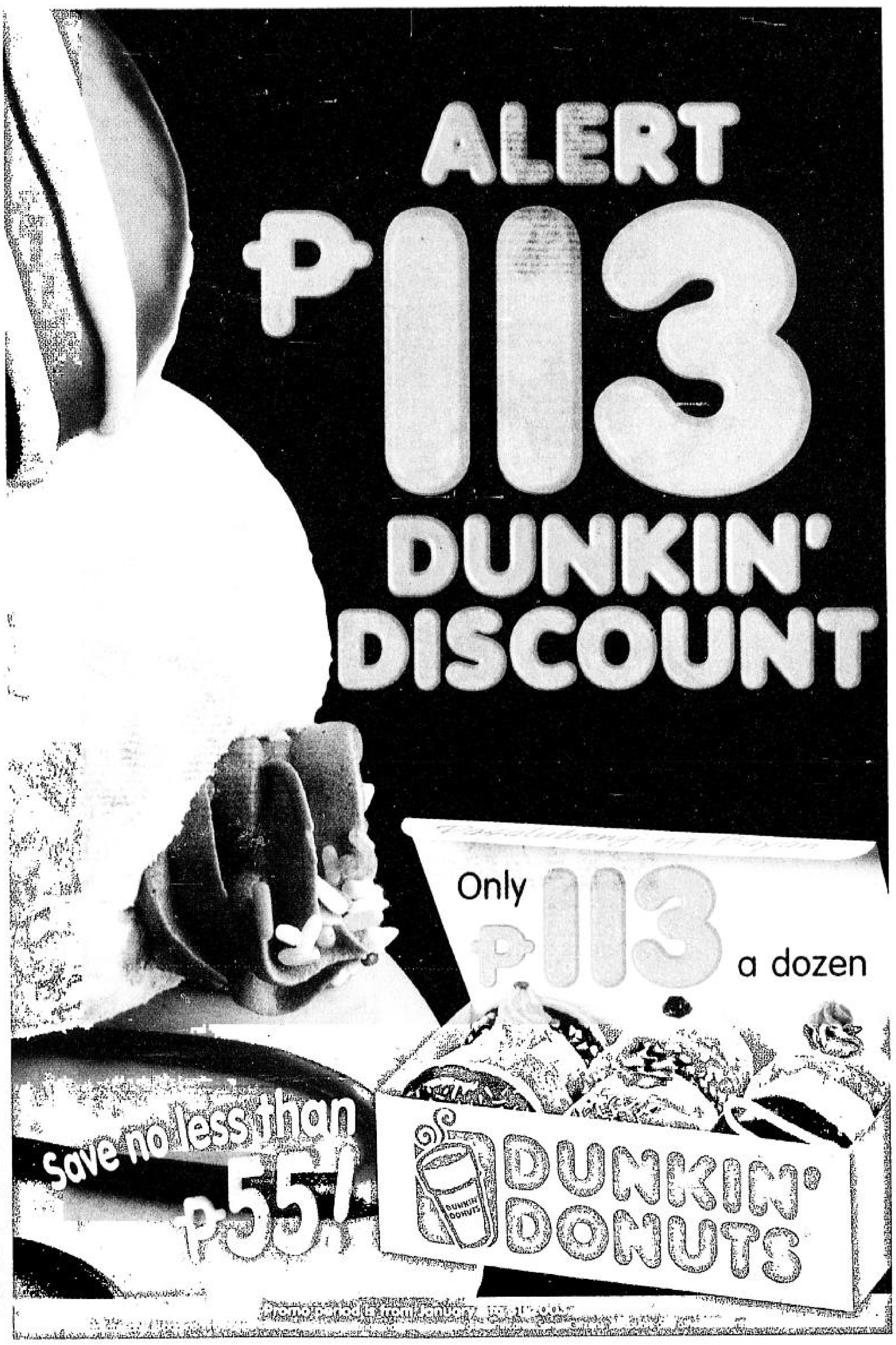
Despite the uncertainty and confusion, one thing is certain—the pointguard is definitely destined for basketball greatness.

Maui Taylor, Aubrey Miles, etc.

The nymphets caused quiet a sensation this year. But before you say that they are typical, run-of-the-mill bold stars, think again.

Although it is assumed that all a wannabe has to do is to disrobe or make titillating statements to become a household name, there are actually other prerequisites involved such as being young enough to become a certified nymphet. Nothing arouses prurient thoughts as much as a lovely and innocent face.

But what seems to spell the difference for this year's hottest nymphets is the fact that the girls don't seem to need to disrobe to attract attention. Not ex-GROs, they can easily pass for typical good-looking *sosyal colegialas*, in fact.



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Glowing performances in sports 2002

By Dennis Eroa

SPORTING year 2002 had the ingredients for a blockbuster movie.

Basketball was mainly colored blue and red. Ateneo de Manila Uni versity topped De La Salle University in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP), while Coca Cola scored one for the underdogs on Christmas day, shocking Alaska in four games to win the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) All-Filipino Cup.

Coca-cola's Chot Reyes, who was an Ateneo spitfire in his prime, was named coach of the year by the PBA Press Corps, beating Red Bull's Yeng Guiao and Ryan Gregorio, a substitute coach, whose youthful exuberance helped Purefoods win the Governors' Cup.

Guiao started the year by steering the Thunder in winning the Commissioner's Cup.

Yancy de Ocampo, a star from St. Francis Assisi, was the 2002 PBA draft number one pick. Ren Ren Ritualo, who helped La Salle win four straight UAAP titles, was number eight but ended the year as Rookie of the Year. Willie Miller of Red Bull was named Most Valuable Player (MVP), besting teammate Davonn Harp.

Senators Robert Barbers, a former police officer, and John Osmeña headed an investigation of Filipino *mestizos* playing in the PBA, an act lauded by the suddenly active PBA Players Association and by a country tired of shenanigans in sports.

New PBA head

Noli Eala completed a year of the underdog by becoming PBA commissioner.

Eala joined another dynamic leader, Philippine Basketball League (PBL) commissioner, Chino Trinidad.

Intramurals, inadequate cash flows and unbelievable players' salaries sank the Metro Manila Basketball Association last July.

Enrico Villanueva had a triumphant year. He won both PBL and UAAP MVP awards, then the Philippine Sports Authority's outstanding amateur basketball cager of the year.

The Cool Cat controversy erupted right after the La Salle Archers lost their Gimme Five-bid to the Ateneo Eagles in the UAAP. Though La Sallians' sentiments were divided, Cortez left for Los Angeles as rumors flew thick and fast about his supposedly sudden loss of form.

Olympians Charlie Badion, Eddie Decena, Martin Urra and Eddie Lim, former Far Eastern University standout Jack Tanuan, La Salle reliever Miguel Gozum, Alex Clariño and Ben Francisco, veteran of the 1954 World Basketball tilt in Rio de Janiero, bid goodbye to the sporting world.

Thanks to Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski's equestrian gold, the country's campaign in the Busan Asiad ended glowingly. Paeng Nepomuceno, the grand old man of bowling, and young turk RJ Bautista won the doubles gold. The duo of Django Bustamante and Antonio Lining duplicated the feat in billiards. The Philippines completed the Asiad with three gold, 7 silver, and 16 bronze medals.

Boxers struggled with Harry Tanamor managing only a silver and the athletics team bit the dust with the surge of Middle Eastern runners. The country mourned the loss of the all-pro national team in the basketball quarterfinals against host South Korea.

Gunner Lee Sang-Min, he with the sheepish smiles, recovered a loose ball, faked Asi Taulava then let go for a triple that broke Filipino hearts.

It was a nightmare.

Taekwondo, canoeing and wushu had their moments of glory in the regional competition.

All the Asiad medalists received a total of P11.5 million in bonuses from Malacañang.

The no-fear attitude of Manny Pacquiao made him the country's lone world boxing champion. He made a successful third defense of his International Boxing Federation super-bantamweight title, decking Thailand's Fabbrakob Rakkiatgym in the first round of their title bout in October in Davao City.

Boxing experts started to compare Pacquiao to the late Flash Elorde, a national treasure.

A native of the tuna capital, General Santos City, Pacquiao has awesome power and a Rocky-like attitude, which assure him of a long reign. He plans to move higher than the 122 pounds category and test his skills against Johnny Tapia and company.

While Pacquiao had a merry Christmas, Gerry Peñalosa, who recently lost his father, suffered a controversial loss to Masamori Tokuyama in their World Boxing Council super flyweight fight in Osaka.

The loss may have doomed Peñalosa's bid to regain the world championship he won in 1997.

Wind Blown, the country's premier race horse, suffered a stunning defeat from Free Wind in the prize-rich Presidential Gold Cup three days before Christmas at the Sta. Ana race track.

The country's 12-year-old and below athletes got the thrill of their lives in November when the 5th Batang Pinoy was held in Puerto Princesa City.

Up-and-coming swimmer Carlo Alipio Fernandez was the meet's sensation, winning four golds, all in record-breaking fashion.

Joenard Rates, son of ex-pro Joe, copped the Uratex National Caddies Championship at Valley, even as red-hot Benjie Magada became a double winner in the First Gentleman's circuit by topping both the Iloilo and Cebu legs.

CAP-Southwoods and DHL-Mizuno triumphed in the Fil-Am golf tournament in Baguio City, while Manila Golf reigned supreme in the Federation League.

Dottie Ardina and Jayvie Agojo hinted at big things to come following their victories in the international arena.